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HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY SERIES

I

THE
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SOCIETY

JOURNAL OF OCCURRENCES
IN THE ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT
BY GEORGE SIMPSON, 1820 AND 1821,
AND REPORT



TORONTO
THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY

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GEORGE SIMPSON
REPRODUCED FROM SIMPSON'S "NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD"

JOURNAL OF OCCURRENCES IN THE ATHABASCA DEPART- MENT BY GEORGE SIMPSON, 1820 AND 1821, AND REPORT

EDITED BY

E. E. RICH, M.A.

FELLOW OF ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

WITH A FOREWORD BY

LORD TWEEDSMUIR, P.C., G.C.M.G., LL.D.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF CANADA

AND AN INTRODUCTION BY

CHESTER MARTIN, M.A., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT TORONTO UNIVERSITY

TORONTO
THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY

1938

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FOREWORD

As Governor-General of Canada, and as a student of history, I warmly welcome the publication of the Hudson's Bay Company records. The four centuries behind Canada are as full of notable episodes as any similar period in the chronicles of any country, and it is essential not only that their story should be well told, but that the original records should be preserved and studied. The Maritime Provinces, Quebec and Ontario, have, on the whole, wonderfully perfect records, owing to the piety of local scholars; and the Western Provinces are showing themselves zealous in preserving data for their future histories.

The Champlain Society has placed all lovers of Canadian history in its debt by issuing its magnificent series of the classical documents on the subject. Now, in association with that Society, the Hudson's Bay Company is opening its archives to the student. Hitherto they have been accessible only in small parts. The Hudson's Bay Company is one of the two great pioneering corporations in our history, and the story of the opening of the Canadian West and North is not less romantic than that of the creation of British India. It is a great tale, with dark patches in it like all human records, but on the whole a superb testimony to man's fortitude and courage. For nearly two centuries the Company was the principal factor in the administration of half a continent; it has changed with changing times, but it is still a vital element in Canada's life. To the scholar and the citizen alike its records are a national heritage.

TWEEDSMUIR

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* Reproduced from *A narrative of a journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the years 1819, 1820, 1821, and 1822*, by John Franklin (John Murray, 1823).

PREFACE

THE first volume of the Hudson's Bay Record Society is the result of many factors and calls for the acknowledgment of many debts. The formation of the Society itself was rendered possible by the unremitting care with which the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company have safeguarded their archives, and by their support of the project. The Chairman and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Record Society have produced a practicable scheme of publication, and the Champlain Society has immeasurably facilitated the task of putting it into effect: that Society has agreed to publish the volumes of Hudson's Bay Records and to issue them to its own subscribers.

In the preparation of the manuscript for press, Mr. R. H. G. Leveson Gower, the Company's Archivist, and his staff have contributed invaluable assistance, and the thanks of the Hudson's Bay Record Society are due to them, to Count Roberto Weiss, and to the Company's Secretary, Mr. J. Chadwick Brooks, who has readily placed every facility at the disposal of the Editor and has been a constant and active organiser of the scheme for publication.

The complete text of Simpson's 'Report and Journal' has been transcribed verbatim, and no attempt has been made to 'edit' the document except by ensuring textual accuracy and by supplying it with notes and appendixes. In the preparation of the notes and appendixes considerable help has been given by individual members of the Champlain Society, who have placed their knowledge at the Editor's disposal. Dr. J. B. Tyrrell and Mr. W. Stewart Wallace particularly have been most generous in their help, and special thanks are due to them.

The two appendixes have been added to the text in order to group together notes (which would otherwise appear at the foot of the appropriate page) on the trading posts and districts,

and on persons. This has been done to facilitate reference to these notes in future volumes of the Hudson's Bay Company's records. The biographical appendix (B) includes much which has been taken from W. Stewart Wallace's 'Documents relating to the North West Company' (Champlain Society XXII): it appears advisable to repeat such information here in order to unify the appendix and to make future reference easier.

Apart from care for the text and notes, the Editor's chief task has been the selection of the document for publication. The wisdom of departing from a chronological order of publication may well be questioned, but the vast mass of documents to be dealt with made such a decision inevitable if the publication scheme was to have any flexibility and vitality. The publication of a number of short series of two or three documents which would deal with important topics was therefore accepted as the most desirable policy. The Company's Charter of 1670 has already been published, much work has been done on Groseilliers and Radisson, and more is at present known of the early years of the Company than about the great formative years of the early nineteenth century. The struggle and amalgamation with the North West Company has therefore been taken as the first topic to be dealt with. For the study of this chosen topic the interest and importance of Simpson's Report and Journal will, we hope, be sufficiently apparent from Professor Chester Martin's Introduction and from the document itself.

E. E. RICH
St. Catharine's College
Cambridge

19. 10. 38

INTRODUCTION¹

I. THE END OF AN EPOCH

I

THIS remarkable journal of a very remarkable man was written at a juncture in the fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company which gives it an historical interest out of all proportion to its intrinsic value as a chapter in the technique of the fur trade. In that respect also there is distinction in its authorship, and in the light which it throws upon the deadly rivalry, then at its worst, between the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies. But in a broader context the *Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department* is probably unique. It marks the end of one epoch and the beginning of another, a turning-point in the fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company second only in importance perhaps to the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada in 1870.

For a century and a half the St. Lawrence had been competing spasmodically with Hudson Bay for the richest spoils of the North American fur trade. By 1821 this rivalry had become so serious that disaster awaited them both. This *Journal* is the record of the last campaign of the Hudson's Bay Company for the beaver trade of the Athabaska.² It is also the record of the first foray of its author into a field which he came to dominate for forty years. In the midst of the campaign the coalition of 1821 brought the feud between the rival fur companies to a close. Within a decade the Canadian fur trade in the

¹ In the preparation of this Introduction my warmest acknowledgments are due to Mr. Rich, Editor, and Mr. Leveson Gower, Archivist of Hudson's Bay Records; and also to Professor Innis, Mr. W. S. Wallace, and Mr. Harvey Fleming for details which I had the opportunity of discussing with them in Toronto.

² The spelling 'Athabaska', as adopted by the Geographic Board of Canada, has been used throughout the Introduction except in quotations and in the title to Simpson's *Journal*.

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West by way of the St. Lawrence came to an end, and a new regime by way of Hudson Bay consolidated more than a quarter of the North American continent into a commercial empire of unsurpassed efficiency under the Hudson's Bay Company. The same intrepid strategist who had directed the last campaign in the Athabaska was the architect of this new empire; and he lived to guide its destinies until the march of 'manifest destiny' south of the boundary forced a realignment of British policy. Scarcely more than a decade after his death this whole vast empire from the Great Lakes to the Pacific found its way into the new Canadian Confederation.

Simpson's regime may fairly be regarded as the golden age of the Hudson's Bay Company, and his *Athabaska Journal* is the opening chapter of his career in the fur trade. Little, however, of its ultimate significance is to be found in the immediate background. The *Journal* itself is primarily concerned with technical details of conflict. To the last moment Simpson is indomitable. After a winter of 'miseries in Athabasca' the news of the coalition finds him marshalling his men for a coup at the foot of the Grand Rapid, 18th June, 1821. His first impulse is 'disappointment that instead of a junction our Opponents have not been beaten out of the Field, which with one or two years of good management I am certain might have been effected'. But at Norway House the following day—the fifth anniversary of the Massacre of Seven Oaks—wiser counsels prevail. Simpson himself begins to discern 'a very advantageous and satisfactory arrangement'; and the *Journal* closes with this dawn of a new empire by way of Hudson Bay. It would be hard to find a more appropriate epitome either of the man or of the Hudson's Bay Company at the cross-roads of fortune. There is a certain appropriateness too in the choice of this *Journal* to inaugurate the formal publication of Hudson's Bay Records under the joint auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Champlain Society of Canada. In the background of the two centuries from the Charter of 1670 to the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada in 1870, the events of 1820-21 have almost the contours of a mountain range, visible in retrospect from the remotest boundaries of the Company's history.

2

The immediate context for the *Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department* must be found in the decade of conflict from 1810 to the coalition; but the rivalry between Hudson Bay and the St. Lawrence stretches back for a century and a half in the history of the fur trade.

For nearly a century before that again, the national rivalries of France and England in the new world had followed the same channels.

The French dream of colonial empire by way of the St. Lawrence was just beginning with Champlain's search for the western sea when Elizabethan seamen braved the more alluring hazards of the north-west passage. Captain Button, who passed the winter of 1613 at the mouth of the Nelson and claimed that vast watershed for King James of England, bore letters from his sovereign to the Emperor of Cathay. For more than a century this dream of a colonial empire on the highways of the world's commerce to the orient is attested by the names of Hudson and Frobisher, of Davis, Button, Fox, James, and Baffin on the maps of the Canadian North. The dream itself soon receded into the ice-bound shores of the Arctic, but long before Captain Middleton (1742) declared roundly that they could never discover what was not there, the Company of Adventurers had discovered a more lucrative empire in the fur trade of the Hudson's Bay Company.

As the traders from New France encroached upon the East Main, Kelsey was sent to the Churchill and to the Saskatchewan (1689-91) to explore the beaver resources of the West. Here, too, the Hudson Bay route and the St. Lawrence had fairly come to grips under Henday and La Corne when New France itself became British, and the rivalry from the St. Lawrence was renewed with ruthless energy by the Scottish merchants of Montreal.

The dream of commercial empire by way of the St. Lawrence, inherited by the Montreal and Quebec merchants, was to pass through many vicissitudes in Canadian history. At almost every stage it was marked out for disillusionment and frustration.¹ For nearly half a century in the technique of the fur trade, however, it came nearest to success. Nothing to surpass the enterprise and resourcefulness of the North West Company had ever arisen in British America. By the end of the eighteenth century the Canadian fur trade had become an uncompromising monopoly. Twice only was the mastery of the North West Company in the fur trade of the St. Lawrence threatened from Montreal itself. In 1785 a small group of traders led by John Gregory, Alexander Mackenzie, Norman McLeod, and Peter Pangman, precipitated 'the severest struggle ever known in that part of the world', until ruinous losses and the prospect of further plunder and bloodshed led to an amalgamation in 1787. 'After the murder of one of our partners,' wrote Sir Alexander Mackenzie in 1801, 'the laming of

¹ See D. C. Creighton, *The Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence*, Toronto, 1937.

another, and the narrow escape of one of our clerks, who received a bullet through his powder horn . . . they were compelled to allow us a share of the trade.'

The growth of the next decade was phenomenal. In 1788 the gross 'annual amount of adventure' did not exceed £40,000. By 1799 the trade had trebled in volume, 'surpassing . . . anything known in America.'¹ In that year a second revolt, directed against the autocratic rule of Simon McTavish, 'the Marquis' of the North West Company, was again led by Alexander Mackenzie and a group of younger merchants in the X Y Company. British capital was enlisted in the enterprise, and in 1804 Edward Ellice sought allies even in the Hudson's Bay Company. 'I myself', stated Ellice before the select committee of the British House of Commons in 1857, 'offered Sir Richard Neave, who was then governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, £103,000 Navy £5 per cents for the whole Hudson's Bay Company. . . . That transaction only was not carried into effect because part of the stock was found to be the property of infants, and other persons incapable of giving a title or making a transfer.' The social and economic life of Montreal was involved in the conflict, for 'the whole of the Canadian society, every person of eminence and of consequence there, was then engaged in the fur trade'.² It was in 1803 that the *Canada Jurisdiction Act* (43, Geo. III, c. 138) was passed in order to regulate this lawless conflict between the Canadian factions. During the decade of conflict at Red River and in the Athabaska, as we shall see, the statute of 1803 was to be invoked with more devastating effect against the Hudson's Bay Company.

For the Canadian trade the death of 'the Marquis' in 1804 opened the way to reunion under the North West Company. It was in this ruthless school that Colin Robertson learnt the technique of the Canadian fur trade with which he afterwards sought to invigorate 'the jog-trot mode' of the Hudson's Bay Company. After the coalition of the North West and X Y Companies the Canadian trade, under the dominant influence of William and Simon McGillivray, perfected this technique until their trading posts were to be found from Fort William to the Arctic Circle and the Pacific Ocean. David Thompson, whom Dr. Tyrrell has named the greatest of British land geographers, carried the trade across the Rockies. In 1813 Fort Astoria of the Pacific

¹ *Voyages to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans*, Alexander Mackenzie, London, 1801, pp. xix, xxiii. See H. A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, 1930, ch. iii.

² *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Company*, 1857, pp. 344, 322.

Fur Company passed to the North West Company. In 1811 the Nor' Westers boasted returns greater than those of the Hudson's Bay Company itself, from the chartered territory claimed by the Company.¹ In Athabaska, the Eldorado of the beaver trade, the North West Company was almost unchallenged. The dream of a commercial empire by way of the St. Lawrence was a grim reality. A maritime fur trade from the Columbia to China confirmed it by half-circumnavigating the globe.

3

In the conflict between the River and the Bay, almost every natural advantage for the fur trade was to be found on the side of the Hudson Bay route. Had no rivals intervened in the 'up-country', no technique could have excelled the primitive simplicity and economy of the Hudson's Bay trade. Ships could be chartered by the season for the annual voyage to the Bay, with trade goods and supplies for Moose, York, and Churchill and with furs in return for the London market. The trapping was done during the winter when the furs were prime. In the spring the Indians themselves were content to bring their winter's catch of furs to the Bay. The trade was conducted with characteristic aloofness and conservatism 'through a window or hole'.² During the summer the furs could be packed for the autumn voyage to London. During the winter the trade goods could be prepared for the annual visit of the Indians in the spring. 'Ordinarily,' wrote La Potherie during the French occupation of Fort Nelson, 'a thousand men, some women, and about six hundred canoes may arrive.'³ For nearly a century this unenterprising technique was justified by primitive honesty on the part of the Indian, by sobriety and thrift on the part of the Company's servants, and by substantial dividends for the stockholders of the Company.

Compared with this primitive barter the organization of the North West Company taxed the enterprise of the most resourceful mercantile community in the British provinces. The waterways, to be sure, were almost miraculous in their range and intricacy, and the birch canoe a miracle too of efficiency. A trader could embark at Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan, and with no portage longer than a single

¹ *Selkirk Papers*, Public Archives of Canada, p. 213; Innis, *op. cit.*, ch. iii.

² *Report on the State of the Hudson's Bay Company*, London, 1749, p. 216.

³ J. B. Tyrrell, *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay*, The Champlain Society, 1930, p. 266.

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day could reach the Arctic Ocean, the Pacific, the Atlantic or the Gulf of Mexico. But the toil was endless, and nothing but the woodcraft and almost incredible hardihood of the French-Canadian *voyageur* could have survived the ordeal. From Montreal up the Ottawa and the Mattawa; over the height of land to Lake Nipissing; down French River to Georgian Bay; past the Sault Ste. Marie and along the north shore of Lake Superior, the Montreal agent came by *canot du Maître* for the annual conference at Fort William, the strategic centre of the Canadian fur trade. Coming by *canot du Nord* to the same rendezvous, the winter partner from the Athabaska reached the Saskatchewan by the Methy Portage and a labyrinth of waterways, followed the Saskatchewan, Lake Winnipeg and Winnipeg River, Lake of the Woods, Rainy River, Rainy Lake (the depot for the season's furs from the Athabaska) and over the height of land to Fort William. No fewer than 60 large lakes, 130 portages where canoes and goods were both taken from the water, and 200 smaller *décharges* where goods alone had to be carried, were to be counted in the voyage from Ste. Anne on the Ottawa to the Athabaska. But there was one supreme advantage after this endless toil. The Nor' Wester reached the Indian before the Indian reached the Bay. As early as 1754 the 'richest skins' on the Saskatchewan were being taken by the traders from New France; and Henday, who had sought a backwater by way of Moose Lake to evade their line of approach, conceded that the Frenchmen had 'the advantage of us in every shape'. After the cession of Canada in 1763 the attack from the St. Lawrence was renewed with contagious enterprise. By 1774 the old Hudson Bay technique was doomed, and the building of Fort Cumberland on the Saskatchewan by Samuel Hearne marked the beginning of a competition, post by post and season by season, that was not relaxed until the conflict came to a close in 1821.

Farther north, on the Athabaska, the approach of the Nor' Westers was still more difficult. 'Till the year 1782', wrote Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 'the people of Athabasca sent or carried their furs regularly to Fort Churchill, Hudson's Bay.' But the wealth of beaver in that district and the fact that it lay beyond the area claimed under the Hudson's Bay Charter, proved doubly attractive for the Canadian trade. By 1800 the domination of the North West Company in Athabaska was complete. From beginning to end this domination was maintained by sheer enterprise in defiance of geography. William McGillivray himself, as we shall see, conceded that the Hudson's Bay Company 'brought their goods to the Indian Country at less than one-half the Expence that ours cost us'. By 1810, however, the technique which

the Nor' Westers developed in establishing their own monopoly from Montreal had been reduced to a discipline of ruthless efficiency, and they could afford to taunt their opponents with their abject failure to recover the field. The Hudson's Bay Company itself conceded that 'in the present state of the finances of the Company it would be madness' to make the attempt.¹

With this general background the decade of conflict which began in 1811 must be explored for the two factors which made it at once so devastating and so conclusive. Selkirk began his project of settlement in Assiniboia, and Colin Robertson inspired the Company to fight the Nor' Westers by their own methods and upon their own ground in Athabaska.

II. THE DECADE OF CONFLICT: SETTLEMENT AT RED RIVER

I

Settlement at Red River, which survived to serve a far-reaching national design in Canada, may be regarded as the work of one man during a single decade. By its very nature it was an exotic element in the fur trade. For many years the dominant interest of Thomas Douglas, fifth Earl of Selkirk, had been the deflection of British emigration from the United States to the British provinces. This project of settlement under the Charter of a fur-trading company was perhaps the most curious innovation in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company. As an official policy it came to an end with the tragic death of its founder, but the single decade of Selkirk's work in Assiniboia may fairly be said to have saved the Charter and planted a vested interest which safeguarded at last a transcontinental British Dominion.

The range of opposition among Selkirk's enemies and of misunderstanding among his friends lends an element of tragedy to the story of Assiniboia. How far the Company itself was coerced into the project by the technique of the board-room, it would not be easy to determine. No doubt the directorate shared the hope that settlement would vindicate the Charter; that the personnel of the fur trade could be recruited in the process of colonization; that the trading posts of the Company could be supplied with provisions from the strategic centre of Rupert's Land; and that the retiring servants of the Company at Red River

¹ Wollaston's Observations, *Selkirk Papers*, p. 16.

would automatically reinforce the authority of the Company.¹ In Rupert's Land, however, there was immediate opposition from the fur trade. Auld, the Superintendent at York Factory, as Colin Robertson afterwards reflected, was 'one of the greatest enemies your Lordship ever had'.² Governor Macdonell's overthrow at Red River was traceable in no small measure to Auld's devious and malicious counsels. He ventured to suggest to Selkirk himself that he had been 'imposed on', and responded to Selkirk's displeasure by going over to the Nor' Westers in London. Selkirk's own relatives were increasingly critical. One of them at the outset confessed himself 'the foremost among the croakers'. Even Lady Selkirk, whose loyalty is perhaps the most pleasant feature of the Red River project, scarcely shared her husband's enthusiasm. 'I acknowledge', she wrote ruefully from Montreal, 'I cannot swallow the exchange of St. Mary's Isle for your kingdom on Red River.' Others were less tactful, and preferred 'home truths' with devastating candour. In 1821 Andrew Colville, his brother-in-law, wished the Red River Settlement 'had been in the Red Sea 20 years ago'.

Among the Nor' Westers the opposition was of course implacable. A few of them had reason to know that 'his Lordship as sincerely as singularly believes in the probability of ultimate success'.³ Others wrote of the 'paroxysms of his *colonizing disorder*', and professed to believe that the 'bible peer' was 'governed by the moon'. As the conflict deepened William McGillivray represented 'this pretended scheme of a colony' to Commissioner Coltman as 'a cloak thrown over the avaricious designs of the Earl of Selkirk to become a monopolizer of the fur trade'.⁴ Simon McGillivray in London had impugned Selkirk's project from the outset: '*he must be driven to abandon it, for his success would strike at the very existence of our Trade.*' Within five years the Red River Settlement was almost completely submerged beneath the fortunes of the fur trade. It was twice destroyed by the North West Company. On 19th June, 1816, Governor Semple and more than twenty of his men were massacred at Seven Oaks. A few weeks later Selkirk himself plunged into a sordid conflict at Fort William which stained his name, compromised his cause, and cost at

¹ One-tenth of Assiniboia, by the terms of the Grant of 12th June, 1811, was reserved for the retiring servants of the Company. For the Grant, see Chester Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, Oxford Press, 1916, Appendix B.

² Robertson to Selkirk, 1st January, 1817, *Selkirk Papers*, 3037.

³ *A Narrative of Occurrences*, London, 1817, p. 59.

⁴ *Papers Relating to the Red River Settlement*, 1819, p. 136.

last his fortune and his life.¹ After his death the coalition buried the blunders of all parties concerned and left the Red River Settlement almost a derelict. 'Every Gentleman in the Service both Hudson's Bay and North-West', wrote Simpson in 1822, was 'unfriendly to the Colony'.²

2

It will be unnecessary here to review the course of Selkirk's lifelong interest in colonization before it came within the orbit of the fur trade. As early as 1802 he had pledged to the Colonial Secretary 'his personal exertions and the best years of his life' to a project of buying out the Hudson's Bay Charter and of directing to Red River a systematic emigration from Ireland—'a radical cure such as Military coercion cannot effect', for the turmoil of Irish disorder after the Union.³ But official policy favoured 'Salutary neglect' for the fur trade, and opposed 'colonization at all *en masse*' for Ireland. The approach to Red River was closed for seven years during which the most successful settlement in the history of Prince Edward Island and a less successful enterprise in Upper Canada were undertaken from the Scottish Highlands.

With Selkirk's marriage to the sister of Andrew (Wedderburn) Colvile,⁴ a director and afterwards Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, a renewed interest in the Red River district opened a prospect of acquiring under the Charter itself the sanctions withheld in 1802 by the Government. As early as 1808 Selkirk, with a directorate in view, was buying Hudson's Bay stock in co-operation with Sir Alexander Mackenzie himself, whose *Voyages* in 1801 had probably suggested for the first time the importance of the Red River district. The prospect of inducing the Company itself to sponsor colonization as a major policy under the Charter was not promising. Auld, Superintendent of the Northern Department, was sent to York Factory with instructions for 'the formation of a colony at Red River'. His letters were 'calculated to induce them to abandon any such intention'. In the end Selkirk himself was 'induced to make a proposal which met the views of the Directors, viz. to take upon himself the charge of forming the intended

¹ 'The whole mischief was done in the course of the first six weeks at Fort William.' Lady Selkirk to Halkett, 12th June, 1817, *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

² To Colvile, *Selkirk Papers*, 7623.

³ *Q. Series*, 293, p. 178. Pub. Arch. Can.

⁴ The name of Colvile was taken by Royal Licence in 1814.

settlement'.¹ In the grant of Assiniboia (12th June, 1811) an area of 116,000 square miles commanding the most important network of waterways in Rupert's Land was set apart for the new venture.²

Meanwhile Sir Alexander Mackenzie and the Nor' Westers had taken the alarm, and proposed a division of the field in the fur trade.³ This was repeated in London within a fortnight of the grant of Assiniboia, and its failure was attributed to 'the views of others who have different objects from the Fur Trade of the Company'.⁴ Protesting that Assiniboia should be sold at auction and that Selkirk's whole plan was 'dictated by a wild and frantic spirit of Projection',⁵ the Nor' Westers took measures to defeat both fur trade and settlement in Rupert's Land. 'Had the Company sacrificed £20,000', wrote Mackenzie, 'which might have secured a preponderance in the stock of the Hudson's Bay Company, it would have been money well spent.'⁶

There can be no doubt that settlement in Assiniboia was intended to vindicate the Hudson's Bay Company's Charter.⁷ The most vulnerable feature of the Charter was its monopoly of 'trade and commerce'. Whatever Parliament or trade rivals might say of monopoly, legal counsel almost unanimously upheld the proprietary rights of the Company. Here at least the Charter was defensible. From the outset Selkirk asserted 'the unimpeachable validity of these rights of property', and recognized 'no scruple in enforcing them wherever you have the physical means'.⁸ It may be fair to add that the Company's proprietary rights were afterwards vindicated by the event;⁹ though it is fair also to question their survival at all had Selkirk not asserted them at the nadir of the Company's fortunes in Assiniboia. By fur traders in Rupert's Land, North West

¹ Mem. by Selkirk in *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

² From Lake Winnipeg, the Winnipeg and Rainy Rivers south-westward to the height of land. For boundaries see Chester Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

³ 7th November, 1810, *Selkirk Papers*, 188. The N.W.C. was to give up seventeen posts south of the Saskatchewan.

⁴ *Selkirk Papers*, 205. The Committee had found the 'scheme so totally inadmissible that to entertain it would imply a disregard both of the Interest and Honour of the Body we represent'.

⁵ *A Narrative of Occurrences*, Appendix i.

⁶ L. R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, Quebec, 1890, ii, 53.

⁷ See Chester Martin, *op. cit.*, 47 ff.

⁸ To Hillier, 18th June, 1812, *Selkirk Papers*, 407 f.

⁹ Cf. Ellice himself in the *Report of the Sel. Comm. of the H. of C.*, 1857, 327 f. and the Colonial Secretary in *Corr. Rel. to the Surrender of Rupert's Land*, 1869, p. 12: 'Various eminent law officers, consulted in succession, have all declared that the validity of this Charter cannot justly be disputed by the Crown.'

and Hudson's Bay alike, Selkirk's doctrine in 1811 was met with incredulity and astonishment. The truculence of Macdonell at Red River in 1814, the fatal rashness of Semple, the almost incredible ingenuousness of Selkirk himself, filled the decade of conflict from 1811 to the coalition with fantastic aberrations. Hillier on the Upper Churchill was instructed to 'overawe any attempt at violence on the part of the Canadians', to 'teach the messieurs voyageurs to keep a respectable distance', and on occasion to 'seize their nets as you would in England those of a poacher'.¹ At Red River Macdonell's embargo on pemmican courted disaster for the Settlement in the 'pemmican war'. Selkirk himself lived to indulge 'bitter enough reflections' and to deplore 'the consequences so naturally and justly arising from my wretchedly ill-judged conduct' at Fort William.² But not even 'the great mistake' could belie his dominant interest in settlement and the Company's chartered 'rights of property'. In reply to Lady Selkirk's deep concern he wrote from Fort William with vehemence altogether unusual in that congenial relationship: 'You speak as if I had an inclination to dabble in the fur trade on my own account. I am surprised that you should imagine such a thing. . . . It is a business that I hate from the bottom of my heart.' Within a few weeks of his death he protested with all his remaining strength against 'giving up the settlement or selling it to the North-West':

'That is entirely out of the question. . . . I ground this resolution not only on the principle of supporting the settlers whom I have already sent to the place, but also because I consider my character at stake upon the success of the undertaking, and upon proving that it was neither a wild and visionary scheme nor a trick and a cloak to cover sordid plans of aggression.'³

3

The vicissitudes of the Red River Settlement during this decade of conflict have been traced elsewhere.⁴ It may suffice here to outline the bearing of this conflict upon the fortunes of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies.

It was obvious that the preliminary proposals and counter-proposals of 1810-11 were in their nature mutually unacceptable. That of the

¹ *Selkirk Papers*, 382.

² To Lady Selkirk, 23rd April, 1817, *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

³ To Colville, 11th December, 1819, *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

⁴ Chester Martin, *Canada and its Provinces*, vol. 19; *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, ch. iii-vii, xi, xii.

North West Company for a division of the field was 'totally inadmissible' because it would have invaded the chartered territory of the Hudson's Bay Company; while the chartered rights claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company would have deprived the North West Company of half their trade—for they got more than the Hudson's Bay Company itself from the lands claimed under the Charter. The inducement offered by the Hudson's Bay Company—the concession of the Pacific and Athabaska trade to the Canadian company—was dismissed with the observation that 'the results of the attempts . . . by the Hudson's Bay Company to penetrate into Athabasca should be sufficient to deter them from any such interference in future.'¹

A successful settlement at Red River, however, would vindicate the Charter in its most defensible form and would dominate the line of communications from the Athabaska to the St. Lawrence waterways. From this area came more than thirty-five tons of pemmican for the winter brigades of the North West Company. Nearly a fortnight before the Grant of Assiniboia the London partners urged their 'unanimous opinion' for 'an express to the interior to prepare your people for a year of trial'.² The new governor of Assiniboia, Captain Miles Macdonell, a Canadian Glengarry highlander, once Sheriff of the Home District in Upper Canada, had 'reason to expect that every means the North-West company can attempt to thwart it will be resorted to'. Selkirk, who detected from the outset a strain of 'erroneous impressions' in his lieutenant, put him on his guard against false friends in the fur trade and defended him loyally against the directorate in London. To Colville's advice to 'go on as you have done hitherto' Selkirk replied truly that Macdonell was 'in a Situation altogether new'.³

The intrigues of Auld, Superintendent of the Northern Department, are in evidence from the outset. Private letters of caution with instructions to be returned in case of Macdonell's death were returned to Selkirk 'in consideration of the worse than mortal incapacity of that person'. He had not 'done even by mistake one single thing right'.⁴ There can be no doubt that the embargo on pemmican (January, 1814) which precipitated the conflict at Red River was approved at York Factory during the previous autumn:⁵ whether for the overthrow of

¹ 6th August, 1811, *Selkirk Papers*, 213.

² Simon McGillivray to McTavish, McGillivray & Co., 1st June, 1811, *Correspondence at St. Mary's Isle*.

³ June, 1813, *Selkirk Papers*, 647.

⁴ *Selkirk Papers*, 836, 856.

⁵ 'The decided opinion of every person . . . you then expressed yourself strongly in favour of it.' Macdonell to Auld, 12th April, 1814, *Selkirk Papers*, 998.

the Settlement or of the North West Company can only be surmised. 'The *Bourgeois* will bluster and strut a bit', was Auld's unaccountable forecast, 'and that will be all.' Macdonell himself, whatever his protestations in 1813,¹ was a partisan in 1814, and looked upon the North West opposition as 'the last struggle of an expiring party'.

With the expected arrival of Selkirk himself with a large party in the autumn, and the hazards of the War of 1812 with the United States, there was a specious case for an embargo upon pemmican, both Hudson's Bay and North West, from Assiniboia; but to the Nor' Westers the measure bore every mark of partisanship—'a piece of inhumanity unheard of'. The embargo quickly developed into a general policy of seizure. At the junction of the Qu'Appelle and the Assiniboine nearly twenty tons of pemmican were seized and escorted to Brandon House and Fort Douglas. The Métis who had 'run' the buffalo and prepared the pemmican took sides against the Settlement. Nearly ten tons of Hudson's Bay pemmican also were 'surrendered'. When the winter partners came down in the spring there was some consternation at Macdonell's 'strange notions'. For a time the Nor' Westers pondered the necessity of sending out their own furs by way of York Factory to escape capture by the American army in Upper Canada.²

At the summer rendezvous at Fort William there was a different outlook. The news of 'the pemmican war' had been sent down by express canoe. William McGillivray who was there in person to direct the 'year of trial' in the interior said 'it was the first time the North West Company has ever been insulted'. McGillivray's own brother-in-law, John McDonald of Garth, was 'censured' for having played the peacemaker. Alexander Macdonell called out his man in defence of his reputation. 'The unfortunate compromise of our honour at Red River', he wrote, was to be obliterated by a ruthless campaign against the Settlement. 'You see myself and our mutual friend Cameron (he added) so far on our way to commence open hostilities against the enemy in Red River. . . . Nothing but the complete downfall of the colony will satisfy some by fair or foul means. A most desirable object if it can be accomplished, so here is at them with all my heart and energy.'

¹ 'I had no orders nor was I inclined to give any molestation to the North-West Company in the prosecution of their ordinary trade in Furs.' *Selkirk Papers*, 595.

² 'His Majesty's Ministers have applied to us for our permission to suffer the North-West Company to send their provisions and goods for this present year by the way of York Fort.' H.B.C. to Thomas, April, 1814, *H.B.C. Archives*, A/6/18/ p. 147.

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The summer conference at Fort William had developed a plan of campaign new even to that versatile and resourceful enterprise. Alexander Macdonell and Duncan Cameron were authorized to bring the settlers, passage free, to Upper Canada. The skirl of the pipes and lavish hospitality at Fort Gibraltar during the winter, and promises of free land in the Canadas, wrought insidiously for the coup in June. 'Now or never,' wrote Alexander Macdonell. 'This Spring', added Siveright from Portage la Prairie, 'must decide the entire ruin of the colony.' Attempts to raise the Cree and Assiniboiné Indians against the Settlement completely failed,¹ but when the winter partners assembled at the Forks in June, Macdonell surrendered 'for the safety of the colony'. The settlers who remained loyal to Selkirk found their way to Jack River. More than 130 men, women, and children embarked in the North West canoes for Fort William. Fort Douglas and the primitive houses of the Settlement were burnt to the ground. 'I am happy to inform you', wrote Simon McGillivray in July, 'that the Colony has been all knocked in the head by the North-West Company.'²

4

The ensuing stage of the conflict at Red River—the massacre of Governor Semple and more than twenty of his men at Seven Oaks—had results so far-reaching that the whole controversy came to be conditioned by them. The issue spread like a contagion to Fort William, to the Canadas, and to London. Selkirk's retaliation at Fort William was his 'great mistake', for it compromised his cause and destroyed the hope of 'official vindication' during his lifetime. In the Canadas the appointment of a Commissioner to investigate and if possible to compose the tragedy at Red River became imperative. In London no policy of 'Salutary neglect' for the fur trade could countenance the bloodshed of Seven Oaks. Some sort of depurating compromise 'without victory' became the order of the day, and the coalition which followed Selkirk's death marked the beginning as well as the end of an epoch. Many battles in history have had results less significant than the little skirmish of Seven Oaks.

In charge of the summer rendezvous at Fort William in 1815 was Simon McGillivray himself. There were ominous complications for

¹ 'Pour déperruquier Cartouche (Macdonell) et chasser toute la canaille de la Bay d'Hudson de la Rivière Rouge.' *Papers Rel. to R.R.S.*, 1819, p. 161.

² *Selkirk Papers*, 1868.

the North West fur trade. Colin Robertson, as we shall see, was recruiting from Montreal, after the most approved Canadian technique, a foray into the Athabaska. With an advance guard of twenty canoes he found nothing but desolation at Red River. Pushing on to Jack River, he brought the 'loyalists' back to the Forks and soon 'changed the whole complexion of the business'. When Semple, the new governor, with a new party of Sutherlanders, arrived in November he found a new Fort Douglas and a 'new spirit' rising at Red River.

Simon McGillivray's 'campaign of 1816' left a trail of deception in official policy, both Canadian and British. It began with a systematic attempt to mobilize the Métis against the Settlement. 'Little do they know', wrote Alexander Macdonell, 'that their situation last year was but a joke.' By March, 1816, Cuthbert Grant, the young 'Captain-General' of the Métis, reported his men 'all united and staunch'; they hoped to 'come off with flying colours and never see any of them again in a Colonizing way in Red River'. In June, after plundering Brandon House and gathering reinforcements at Portage la Prairie, the expedition moved down the Assiniboine to meet a party of Nor' Westers from Fort William at the Forks on 17th June. The Fort William brigade was judiciously late for the rendezvous. 'I thank Providence', wrote Robert Henry, 'that the Battle was over before we got there as it was our intention to storm the Fort.'¹

Governor Semple at the Forks, daunted by the 'plans of deliberate villainy' captured in the northern express of the North West Company, decided to destroy Fort Gibraltar and make his stand at Fort Douglas. Colin Robertson, at open variance with the Governor, arrested Duncan Cameron and carried him off to York Factory. Semple's incomprehensible rashness in seeking to intercept the Métis at Seven Oaks precipitated an affray of inhuman barbarity. The settlers who survived, men, women, and children, were driven a second time into exile, and the Fort William brigade under A. N. McLeod took possession at the Forks.

In reply to Selkirk's entreaties to Bathurst in London and to Governor Drummond in the Canadas for some 'measure not of vindictive justice but of precaution and police'² for the protection of the Settlement against the North West Company, William McGillivray denied 'in the most solemn manner, the allegations whereon this shameful accusation is founded'. To Bathurst himself Simon McGillivray, the architect

¹ 'Our party consisted of about 100 men, 70 fire arms and 2 field pieces.' To Alex. Henry, 22nd July, 1816, *Selkirk Papers*, 8729.

² Selkirk to Bathurst, 3rd March, 1815, *Selkirk Papers*, 1476.

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of 'the campaign of 1816', wrote on 19th June, 1816—by a curious coincidence the very day of Seven Oaks—to allay 'the suspicions which his Lordship labours to excite against the N. W. Co. . . . I know these accusations to be wholly unfounded. . . . The N. W. Co. have been most unjustly calumniated.'¹

5

Among the immediate results of Seven Oaks was Selkirk's 'great mistake' at Fort William. On the way to Red River by way of Fond du Lac in order to evade the Nor' Westers altogether, Selkirk heard the news at Sault Ste. Marie. Determined to root up a 'most detestable system of villainy', he decided to arrest the Montreal agents in full summer conference at Fort William. The irregularities of the ensuing winter nearly wrecked his cause. The arrest of William McGillivray and his partners was followed by the seizure of Fort William. Search warrants revealed the complicity of the North West Company in the affray at Seven Oaks, but the transactions with Daniel Mackenzie, a discontented partner of the Company, for the purchase of supplies and a specious 'arbitration' were so glaringly indefensible in both law and equity that Selkirk himself pleaded 'guilty of great imprudence'. To Lady Selkirk, as we have seen, he wrote of 'bitter . . . reflections' and the 'consequences so naturally and justly arising from my wretchedly ill-judged conduct'. An incident in November completed his discomfiture.

Early in November a lone constable presented a warrant from Drummond's Island which Selkirk regarded as 'a trick and the pretended constable as an impostor'.² The word was conveyed with all speed to the Colonial Office that Selkirk had resisted arrest. On 11th February, 1817, Bathurst instructed Governor Sherbrooke to indict Selkirk for 'rescue', and 'upon a true Bill being found against him' to arrest him and bring him to trial; and since it was 'almost impossible to hope that he will quietly submit', a military force, if necessary, was to 'prevent the possibility of resistance'. At Selkirk's trial on this charge, many months afterwards, his recognizance was fixed at £50 and the bill was thrown out by the grand jury. Bathurst's despatch was quite unwarranted, but to colonial officials it bore all the weight of indictment, verdict, and sentence combined. Its influence upon colonial courts, commissioners, and law officers of the crown is traceable until

¹ *Selkirk Papers*, 9157.

² *Id.*, 2940.

its existence was accidentally discovered by Selkirk twelve months later in the maze of litigation in the Canadas.¹

A second train of events from Seven Oaks was set in motion by the appointment of a commission in October, 1816, and by influences not so clearly traceable in London. W. B. Coltman, the Commissioner, was a 'good-natured Laugh and Grow fat sort of person who had no wish but to reconcile and tranquillize all parties'.² In his *Statement and Report*, a voluminous but inconclusive chronological narrative,³ the desire is apparent to balance the blame and to prepare the way for compromise—'splitting the difference', 'consulting the wishes of Government', and regarding 'all . . . as culpable and the outrages as mutual'.⁴ To Selkirk himself Coltman ventured to suggest 'terms which . . . might be agreed upon between the Earl of Selkirk and the North-West Company'; but Selkirk disavowed 'individually any concern in the Trade of Athabasca or any other branch of the Fur Trade', and added scathingly that he was not prepared to compound felonies.⁵ 'I think we are all agreed', wrote Lady Selkirk, 'if we are to be poor for three generations we must absolutely fight this out.'

In London and the Canadas alike the current of official policy was already setting towards pacification. Governor Sherbrooke had 'hopes of an approach towards an amicable accommodation between the parties'; the 'under friends of the North-westers at home' transmitted the suggestion to Governor Berens of the Hudson's Bay Company.⁶ As Selkirk's friends in Great Britain forced their way through to Bathurst himself and the more influential members of the Cabinet, Goulburn suggested significantly that 'Government might be disposed to go into and confirm any arrangement the Parties might make between themselves'.⁷

Such at last, as we shall see, were the considerations which came to prevail in official circles. The conflict at Red River made coalition under the belated sanction of the government an official necessity. It

¹ *G. Series*, 325-1, p. 43, Pub. Arch. Can. For the effect of Bathurst's despatch see Chester Martin, *Selkirk*, 129 ff., 134, n. 3, 163 ff., etc.

² Att'y Gen. of U.C. in Allen to Lady Selkirk, *Selkirk Papers*, 4564. Cf. Lady Selkirk to Lady Katherine Halkett, 30th December, 1817: 'Such is the man's bonhomie and good nature that none of us can quite attribute bad intentions to him.' *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

³ In *Papers Rel. to R.R.S.*, London, 1819.

⁴ Gale to Lady Selkirk, *Selkirk Papers*, 4146.

⁵ *Coltman Papers*, M. 778-C. Pub. Arch. Can.

⁶ *Selkirk Papers*, 3667, 4502. The reference is to Goulburn and Gordon, Under-Secretaries in the Colonial Office.

⁷ *Selkirk Papers*, 5966.

remains to trace another train of events which made an 'accommodation between the parties' imperative. The 'War in the Athabasca' reduced the fur companies to the last extremity of their resources.

III. DEADLOCK IN THE FUR TRADE: 'WAR IN THE ATHABASCA'

I

If settlement in Assiniboia was the work of Selkirk, the foray into the famous beaver areas of the Athabaska must be attributed to Colin Robertson. In both cases perhaps, on the part of the Company, there were subtler designs of strategy that did not appear upon the surface.

Robertson's career filled the conflict in the fur trade with incalculable vicissitudes. He had been dismissed from the North West fur trade by John McDonald of Garth in 1809. As early as 17th January, 1810, he approached the Hudson's Bay Company with a project sanctioned by six years of experience and a personal quarrel in the Canadian fur trade. While musquash and marten, the chief furs of the Hudson's Bay Company, were lying unsold in the London warehouses, beaver was selling 'with little or no depression in price'. The Athabaska district, wrote Robertson, was 'the richest in Furs that has as yet been discovered'. It lay 'contiguous to one of your principal Factories', and could be exploited from York Factory or Fort Churchill 'at one-third of the expence which it costs the North-West Co', who braved four months of toil and peril each year in order to 'purchase Beaver at the threshold of your doors'. The profits were estimated at £30,000. 'I cannot conceive', added Robertson, 'how an English Merchant . . . could have so little consideration for his own interests as to neglect the great advantages the Bay can give him over any opponent from Canada.'¹

These superlative advantages in physiography were offset by fatal disadvantages in technique and enterprise. The first was the vexed problem of jurisdiction. While the Company claimed the whole watershed of Hudson Bay under the Charter, and was feeling its way cautiously towards a jurisdiction of its own, it was conceded that the *Canada Jurisdiction Act* (43, Geo. III, c. 138) alone could apply to the Athabaska,

¹ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/10/1/fo. 87. Four years later the Hudson's Bay Company itself, in reply to the North West request for permission to send a ship to the Bay during the War of 1812, estimated that the Hudson Bay route would save the N.W.Co. £10,000, with the additional advantage of an earlier market.

‘the waters of which run into the Northern Ocean.’¹ Within this area convenient warrants issued by North West partners as magistrates in the Indian Territories could play havoc with the fur trade. In 1810 the Hudson’s Bay Company itself had procured from the Governor-General in Canada under the *Jurisdiction Act* commissions for the use of their officers ‘in Athabasca, or any country where the waters do not flow into Hudson’s Bay’; but ‘neither you nor we’, wrote Auld to the directorate, ‘will venture twice across the Atlantic for redress in Montreal . . . perhaps to be at last foiled by bribery or chicane.’ With this immunity from any jurisdiction, either Hudson’s Bay or Canadian, the Nor’ Westers had no compunction in scattering Canadian warrants broadcast against their enemies—against Governor Macdonell and his Sheriff at Red River, against Selkirk himself at Fort William, and against Colin Robertson and Governor Williams, as we shall see, in Rupert’s Land and the Athabaska.

For Rupert’s Land itself it was the doctrine of the Company, fortified by Sir Samuel Romilly, Scarlett, Cruise, Bell and other counsel until 1820, that ‘our own Territories are not included in the words of that Statute’.² From the labyrinth of litigation in Canada after Seven Oaks, however, it seemed clear that concurrent jurisdiction at least could no longer be denied to Canadian courts. By 1820 Tyndall and other British counsel were prepared to revise the official doctrine of the Company: with disconcerting results, as we shall see, for Governor Williams in his coup at the Grand Rapid. It was ‘quite needless to send these men home’: ‘except in cases of Murder and treason, there is no Court in England competent to try crimes and offences committed out of Great Britain.’³ Meanwhile Hudson’s Bay ordinances for the inception of formal jurisdiction in Rupert’s Land had been referred to the Colonial Office, whence every official exertion on the part of the Company for two years was powerless to effect deliverance.⁴ There was literally no legal redress against the ‘lawless aggression of the North-West Company’.

In personnel and enterprise the North West advantages were more obvious. With complete immunity from any effective Hudson’s Bay jurisdiction, the winter partners could afford to keep their own legal weapons in reserve. With ironical nonchalance the well-trained Canadians relied systematically upon a policy of lawless intimidation.

¹ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/8/1/ fo. 152. For 43, Geo. III, c. 138 see above, p. xvi.

² ‘Canadian Courts have no jurisdiction.’ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/6/18/ fo. 252, 293.

³ To Gov. Williams, 26th Feb. 1820, *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/6/19/ fo. 89d-90.

⁴ For H.B. jurisdiction see Chester Martin, *Selkirk*, 48 f., 161, etc.

In 1810 Auld himself wrote from Cumberland House of the 'fell oppression of the Canadians'. 'Inured to Blood' and hardened to 'every crime but real and substantial murder' in the fur trade, they were 'accustomed to lord it over us with brutal sway'. The Orcadians in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, though 'careful, steady and sober', had been 'hired to work and not to fight'. The North West '*battailleurs*' systematically browbeat and bullied them out of their rights as 'old women who had not courage even to defend the furs which they had obtained'.¹

An attempt was made in 1810 to improve the morale by modifying the antiquated system of fixed salaries and offering a direct share in the profits of the trade. One half the net profit of each 'factory' was to be applied in this way.² But there were still obvious defects in 'the New System'. It offered minimum profits instead of a premium to posts in conflict with the Nor' Westers, while factories on the Bay could thrive in 'torpid indolence'. In 1813 half the profits of the whole trade were funded and divided into one hundred shares for graduated distribution: ten shares to each superintendent or governor, four shares to each chief factor, two shares to their 'seconds', and one share each to 'junior master traders'. This was the system which prevailed, with slight variations, until the coalition. For the season 1813-14 the Company guaranteed a profit of £20 per share. For 1814-15 it amounted to £145; in 1816-17 it sank to £19; in 1818-19 it rose again to £95. There were special reasons of strategy, as we shall see, for regarding the Athabaska as a special venture, and the ruinous losses there were not visited upon the rest of the trade.

No device of profit-sharing could in itself counteract the tactics of the Nor' Westers against the frontier posts 'most advanced towards the valuable Beaver Country' of the Athabaska. Here it was necessary to fight fire with fire, and none but French-Canadians, 'those natural water Dogs', could hope to succeed. They were 'the best voyagers in the World', wrote Colin Robertson; 'they are spirited, enterprising, and extremely fond of the Country'; 'however dismal the prospect . . . they follow their Master'; they will 'sing while surrounded with misery; the toil of the day is entirely forgot in the encampment; they think themselves the happiest people in existence; and I do believe they are not far mistaken. It is from these active Subordinate Men, that the North West Co. derives their greatest profit.'

¹ *Selkirk Papers*, 10013.

² In addition to salaries ranging from £50 for the traders and clerks to £100 for chief factors and £150 to superintendents. Wollaston's plan in *Selkirk Papers*, 29.

Commanded by officers 'who understand them' recruited from the Canadian fur trade by Colin Robertson himself, this was to be the force that contested the beaver trade of the Athabaska with the North West Company at the zenith of its power, and set the stage for Simpson's Athabaska campaign of 1820-21.

2

Behind the foray into Athabaska, however, there was a deeper design than a share in the lucrative beaver trade. A last attempt was made in 1815 at an accommodation between the rival companies. In the deadlock which ensued, the opposing strategies are traceable in convincing outline. The Athabaska campaign was designed to extort recognition from the North West Company for fur trade and settlement alike in Rupert's Land.

It is clear from the private instructions to Selkirk in August, 1815, that the chartered rights of the Company were now at stake. If these could be conceded and even 'guarded by the N. W. Co.' to the mutual advantage of both parties against outside competition, the Committee was prepared to renounce both Athabaska and 'Canada to the South of the height of land', and to offer every 'reasonable facility' for the North West trade in transit through Rupert's Land. 'We will agree to give upon a pepper corn rent the use of as many posts as may be necessary', and even 'a lease of a depot at Port Nelson, with a right of transit to Lake Winnipic'. It was in the interest of the Company to confirm these concessions for 'twenty or thirty years' if the 'rights of the Company are guarded by the N. W. Co.'.¹

Negotiations in December, 1815, after Selkirk's arrival in Montreal, quickly moved to a deadlock. The Nor' Westers proposed 'a complete coalition of interests' from 1816 to 1822. One-third of the profits were to go to the Hudson's Bay Company, with every prospect of 'a handsome future annual dividend and of much present comfort'. Since 'unity of management' was essential, the trade in the interior was to be directed by the 'agents of the N. W. Co. at Montreal'. Selkirk's reply was equally uncompromising. A decision upon chartered rights in Rupert's Land was a '*sine qua non* of any arrangement between the two companies': either by 'the Arbitration of eminent legal characters at London' or by the courts themselves. These had been 'too long allowed to remain in an equivocal state. The Directorate was now

¹ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/10/1/ fo. 311.

determined to bring them to issue.' Deadlock was inevitable, and in abandoning 'further negotiations at present as hopeless' both parties revealed their basic strategy. 'The Nor' Westers in rejecting 'abstract pretensions and theories' refused to risk 'a substance in pursuit of a shadow'. They already held the field and would 'not depart unless by legal compulsion'. They would resist with all their 'energy and resource' the threat of 'annihilation by members of a Company to whom the Indian Trade is a secondary object'. In Selkirk's reply the Athabaska campaign is to be seen in its most appropriate context. The Company had rights 'in common with other British subjects to trade beyond the limits of their own property'. These were to be bartered for a recognition of chartered rights in Rupert's Land. 'The opposition to the N. W. Co. in the Athabasca' insisted the directorate was of the 'most essential importance to the permanent interests of the Company'. It would extort 'such arrangements with the N. W. Co. for a division of the Country as will compensate us for our outlay and place the Company's trade on a respectable and sure footing for the future'.¹

With this gage of battle the opposing interests moved rapidly into action. It is clear that there was little ulterior strategy in Colin Robertson's policy. Uncompromising conflict appears in every aspect. As early as April, 1814, he was on his way to Montreal with authority to organize a Canadian expedition for the Athabaska. With £3,000 at his disposal—rapidly augmented to £6,000—he selected Maitland, Garden, Auldjo and Co. as agents for the Company, and quickly made himself indispensable for the Athabaska enterprise. Never until Simpson's own campaign of 1820 was his ascendancy questioned in that field.

It is impossible to read the voluminous diaries and correspondence of Colin Robertson without respect for his resourcefulness in emergencies, his exuberant confidence and initiative. Selkirk wrote of 'the natural impetuosity of his mind'. When 'Lord Chesterfield', as Robertson was known to the Nor' Westers, seized the northern express of the North West Company, one of the winter partners remarked that 'such was not known till the days of Robertson'. When he re-established the settlement in 1815, Semple wrote exultantly that Robertson had 'changed the whole aspect of the business'. The quarrel which ensued between them was also symptomatic. 'Robertson will never do as second to anybody', wrote Lady Selkirk from Montreal, 'unless they had the patience of Job and were as much above him as I am over the children.' His personal animus against the Nor' Westers, his shrewd

¹ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/6/19/ fo. 21.

regard for his own interests, his profusion with the Company's resources, are also self-evident. In the end Simpson, who inherited Robertson's task in the Athabaska and supplanted, as we shall see, not only him but every other competitor in the new empire by way of Hudson Bay, wrote a true word as well as a hard and calculating verdict on Colin Robertson in 1821: 'he will not now be allowed to squander property away to maintain his own consequence.'¹

3

When open conflict became inevitable in the Athabaska, William McGillivray summoned the North West Company to a supreme effort. 'The H.B. Company, you see,' he wrote to Duncan Cameron, 'intend to oppose us seriously in our own way. I hope the Ancient *North West spirit* will rouse with indignation.'² The ruthless technique of the Canadian fur trade was never more effective than during these five years before the arrival of George Simpson in 1820. The winter partners marvelled at the perseverance of their enemies under 'misery and privation'—their fidelity and constancy surpassing 'anything of this kind I have hitherto seen among Canadians'.³ But the 'Ancient *North West Spirit*' was not to be denied. It will not be necessary to trace this uncompromising conflict post by post and season by season. Disaster after disaster befell the Hudson's Bay Company in the unequal contest in the Athabaska, but the deadly attrition in the fur trade was common to both companies. Before it was over even William McGillivray wished himself 'decently out of it'.⁴

The first foray in force into the Athabaska in 1815-16 had results for the Hudson's Bay fur trade scarcely less tragic than Seven Oaks for the Red River Settlement. Colin Robertson, as we have seen, was busy at Red River, and the command devolved upon John Clarke, a veteran of the Athabaska and Pacific fur trade. Clarke's reputation was already known to the Hudson's Bay trade. He had 'resolution and the art of managing Canadians', but he was 'too fond of unnecessary and expensive parade' for Hudson's Bay standards of thrift,⁵ and Simpson

¹ To Colville, 8th September, 1821, *Selkirk Papers*, 7397.

² 6th May, 1815, *Selkirk Papers*, 9170.

³ John McGillivray to Wm. McGillivray, Dunvegan, 17th January, 1816, *Selkirk Papers*, 9145.

⁴ 'Although I shall never submit to be kicked out of it—by any lord or Commoner in the King's Dominions.' *Selkirk Papers*, 2454.

⁵ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/10/1/ fo. 442; *Selkirk Papers*, 1426.

himself, as we shall see, was to underwrite that verdict in 1821. Clarke founded Fort Wedderburn opposite Fort Chipewyan, the North West post on Lake Athabaska, the scene of the Simpson *Journal*; but the disasters of the winter, as he afterwards wrote, were such as he could not describe. Game, usually abundant, was scarcely to be found—'a circumstance hitherto unknown' in the Athabaska. Even Nor' Westers with trained hunters in their service reported that they 'would have starved most completely' had it not been for their pemmican. At Ile-à-la-Crosse and Fort Wedderburn the Hudson's Bay men contrived to subsist. At Great Slave Lake trading supplies were surrendered to the Nor' Westers in return for food. The post at Lesser Slave Lake was comparatively successful; but on the Peace River no fewer than sixteen perished of starvation.

The following season Archibald Norman McLeod, having supervised the extermination of the Settlement after Seven Oaks, appeared upon the scene in the Athabaska as a magistrate in the Indian Territories under the *Canada Jurisdiction Act*. Clarke himself was arrested at Fort Wedderburn and liberated on the recognizance of McLeod's colleague, Robert Henry, who took surety from Clarke in the form of thirty 'pieces' of Hudson's Bay goods valued at £3,000. Clarke was rearrested in April, 1817, taken to Great Slave Lake in June and finally liberated at Ile-à-la-Crosse in August. Meanwhile McLeod had taken possession of Fort Wedderburn, arrested Hudson's Bay men 'about 50 in number',¹ and liberated them on oath not to return to the Athabaska for two years. By 1819 the losses to the Hudson's Bay Company were estimated at 'Forty or Fifty Thousand Pounds'.²

For the campaign of 1818-19 Colin Robertson himself took command and fared no better. He re-established Fort Wedderburn; but on the morning of Sunday, 11th October, 1818, 'when unarmed and employed in performing the funeral service of one of our Men who had lost his life by an accident', he was seized by Samuel Black and Simon McGillivray, Jr. (son of William McGillivray), and carried off to Fort Chipewyan where he was kept a prisoner until the Athabaska brigade left in June for Fort William. On the way to the Saskatchewan Robertson was nearly drowned in 'a most dreadful Rapid', but managed to escape to Fort Cumberland. During the following season (1819-20) he returned to the Athabaska in order to reassure the Indians, and passed the winter on the Peace River; but he was again arrested at the Grand

¹ 'After they had been kept without food for two, and many of them for three days.'

² Berens to Bathurst, 13th September, 1819, *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/8/1/ fo. 145.

Rapid on the Saskatchewan, 29th June, 1820. This time he was taken to Fort William and nearly to Montreal, but he escaped to New York and sailed for England in November, 1820. With Colin Robertson out of the field the prospects in the Athabaska appeared desperate. It was this emergency, as we shall see, which brought George Simpson upon the scene for the final campaign of 1820-21.

4

The conflict had been launched upon its final phase by the arrival of William Williams as Governor in Chief of Rupert's Land in 1818, and his exploit at the Grand Rapid in the following June.¹

It is not easy to appraise the part of Governor Williams in bringing this conflict to a close. There is a suggestion that he had come to the Hudson's Bay Company after a career at sea in the service of the East India Company. His courage in navigating the uncharted sea of Hudson's Bay jurisdiction was assuredly sublime. The draft of his statement to the Governor-General of Canada after the Grand Rapid affair is a bewildering recitation; and his subsequent administration even of the Southern Department fell so far short of thrift and efficiency that he was recalled in 1826. For the emergency in 1818, however, there were qualifications which command admiration. In appointing him Governor in Chief in Rupert's Land in May, 1818, the Hudson's Bay Committee commended him to the service as 'a Gentleman of amiable and conciliatory manners & of an Enterprising and active mind' whose 'talents & habits of life are calculated to command obedience & to insure strict discipline in all under his authority'.² His manly courage, his downright honesty, his easy 'habits of command', his implicit faith in the Charter, are in evidence from the outset. In all conscience these were needed in Rupert's Land in 1818. Nicholas Garry's estimate of Williams is illuminating, and it is reinforced by Garry's own consummate tactics as Hudson's Bay commissioner with Simon McGillivray ('the old Fox') after the coalition. After the delicate task of transferring Williams to the Southern Department, the mutual 'Expression of Feeling' between Garry and Williams did credit to both. 'I would not for the world', writes Garry in his diary,³ 'have hurt the Feelings

¹ After Auld's dismissal Thomas Thomas had acted as Governor until the arrival of Semple, after whose death at Seven Oaks James Bird was induced to act until the appointment of Williams.

² *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/6/19/ fo. 64d.

³ *Trans. Royal Soc. of Can.*, Sec. II, 1900, 165 f.

of a gallant manly Character who had so bravely defended the Rights of the Company at every personal Inconvenience and Hazard of his Life.' 'His Parting with me in the most affectionate and feeling Manner' repaid 'all the Anxieties and Privations which have attended my Mission'. But Garry adds a more penetrating estimate of Williams's 'firm manly Conduct in opposing the North West Company'. 'If he had not gone out', he asserted, the Nor' Westers 'would have had a Fort on the very point where York stands and would eventually have driven the Hudson Bay out of the Field'.¹

Williams reached York Factory in August, 1818. In January, 1819, an express from the Athabaska reached Cumberland House with the news of Colin Robertson's inhuman treatment at Fort Chipewyan. Williams resolved that 'outrages committed by the North West Company will soon *now terminate*'.² 'Passive measures' were 'no longer of any avail': it was time to 'retaliate on these Buccaneers'.³ For Rupert's Land Selkirk himself had no more ingenuous reliance upon the chartered rights of the Company. For use in the Athabaska, bench warrants, 'upwards of Seventy' in number, signed by Chief Justice Monk, had been brought to Red River 'by Express canoe from Montreal'. Collecting a party of 'Thirty Men as Constables' including twenty men under Captain Matthey from the Settlement with small arms and 'a small Field Piece', Williams met the North West Athabaska brigade at the Grand Rapid on 21st June, 1819. Colin Robertson, as we have seen, had

¹ This emphatic statement from Garry challenges attention. On 24th January, 1815, Colin Robertson had warned the H.B.C. that Angus Shaw of the N.W.Co. was going to England 'to form some connexion with a monied house in London and Shaw will take the management of the Ship to Hudson's Bay—if you defeat this step, the fur trade is your own—the information I now give is from the best authorities—if you take that *ship* the North West Co. are no *more*—they cannot bear a loss' (A/10/1/ fo. 201). The Company had already written to Governor Thomas (4th January, 1815): 'We have received intelligence of the intention of the N.W.Co. to send a ship thro' Hudson's Bay to Nelson or Churchill River to take their people from Athabasca. As this proceeding cannot be justified by any pretext of necessity, as it might have been last year (by the War of 1812), we can by no means allow them the same indulgence' (A/6/18/ fo. 244).

Does this account for the appointment of Governor Williams or point to a previous nautical career? And was the arrest of Angus Shaw, as we shall see, by Williams at the Grand Rapid in June, 1819, the justification of Garry's emphatic statement of 1821?

² To Selkirk and McLeod, *H.B.C. Arch.*, D/1/1/ pp. 10-13, 16.

³ *H.B.C. Arch.*, D/1/1/ p. 50.

already escaped his captors ; but John Duncan Campbell and four other Nor' Westers were arrested on Canadian warrants, and Angus Shaw, J. G. McTavish, Benjamin Frobisher, and three others on Williams's own warrants as Governor of Rupert's Land. Simon McGillivray, Jr., and a small party escaped by taking a different route.¹

For the fur trade Williams's coup at the Grand Rapid was the counterpart of Seven Oaks for the Red River Settlement. 'Salutary neglect' was no longer feasible for the issues of trade and jurisdiction in Rupert's Land. Early in 1820 word reached London that Williams had been indicted in Canada and an attempt would be made to 'drag Governor Williams out of the Country'. Williams's own account of the affair at the Grand Rapid was submitted to counsel in London, with disconcerting results for his legal technique and also, it may be added, for his old instructions from the Company. He had enforced Rupert's Land warrants for offences in the Athabaska, and Canadian warrants for the murder of Semple at Red River. He was advised that Canadian courts might have to be conceded a 'concurrent jurisdiction over the Company's territory', and that it might be 'imprudent to resist the Execution of the Warrant' for his own arrest. He was instructed to send Frobisher to Canada for trial; and since there was 'no Court in England competent to try crimes and offences committed out of Great Britain', except for murder and treason, it was 'quite needless to send these men home'. The Committee's instructions for a local trial by jury must have been as novel to Williams as a jury-mast would have been to the Committee.

Frobisher's escape from York Factory and death by starvation on Cedar Lake added the vendetta of blood to the 'insult' at the Grand Rapid. Williams himself narrowly escaped capture with Colin Robertson on 29th June, 1820, by an armed party of more than sixty men under J. D. Campbell and J. G. McTavish themselves, 'but he had passed the Grand Rapid the day before they reached it'.² In London the Committee, fearing an 'attempt to drag Governor Williams out of the Country', resolved to 'send out a person to act as Locum Tenens'.³ On 26th February, 1820, these instructions to Williams were entrusted to George Simpson, and the most redoubtable figure in the history of the Hudson's Bay fur trade set out upon his fortunes in Rupert's Land.

¹ Williams to Gale, 11th July, 1819, *H.B.C. Arch.*, D/1/1/ pp. 29-37.

² Berens to Bathurst, 22nd November, 1820, *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/8/1/ p. 197.

³ 9th February, 1820, *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/1/52/ p. 55d.

IV. SIMPSON IN THE ATHABASKA

I

The shooting of the Grand Rapid of the Saskatchewan, a distance of about two miles in six minutes, is described in the *Journal of Occurrences* as 'the finest run in North America'. Simpson might have cited other reasons for an interest in the Grand Rapid. His appearance in Rupert's Land in 1820 and his Athabaska campaign of 1820-21 were both the results of incidents which happened there. It was Governor Williams's exploit in June, 1819, that led to Simpson's appointment as Governor in Chief *locum tenens*, and it was the capture of Colin Robertson at the Grand Rapid in June, 1820, that forced Williams to countermand Simpson's 'return by the Ships of this Season' and to entrust him, greenhorn though he professed to be, with the most critical and arduous campaign in the Company's service.

Simpson was probably thirty-three years of age when appointed *locum tenens* for the Governor in Chief of Rupert's Land.¹ His birth out of wedlock had not deprived him of a sound education and a start in the mercantile house of Graham, Simpson, and Wedderburn in London, where he met the first major fortune of his remarkable life. He won the esteem of Andrew 'Wedderburn' Colvile whose hard business acumen was to permeate Hudson's Bay House for nearly fifty years. In due time Simpson was to govern more than a quarter of North America, and Colvile himself was to become Deputy Governor (1839-52) and eventually Governor (1852-56) of the Hudson's Bay Company.

How early this vista of mutual confidence opened up between the two is still uncertain, but it is easy to account for Simpson's assured standing with the Committee. His relations with Colvile from Rupert's Land are confidential from the outset. 'To you', he wrote at the end of his first campaign in the Athabaska, 'I feel that I am solely indebted for my advancement in Life, and it will ever be my study that your good offices have not been misapplied.'² Colvile's own references to Simpson's 'Tower Street Friends' and other intimacies including his prospects and his marriage were repaid by a correspondence of remarkable range and candour. During the hard days of his novitiate Simpson once discussed with Colvile a scheme 'to diffuse Xian Knowledge' which reached the rather unchristian conclusion that 'an enlightened Indian is good for nothing'. 'I give my ideas thus freely for your private information', he added, 'in case the subject should come before the Committee, if they were known by the very pious I might be looked

¹ Cf. Appendix B. p. 466.

² 8th September, 1821, *Selkirk Papers*, 7374.

upon as a true North Wester.' ¹ His terse estimates of men and events are offered without reserve. Later on in the secrecy of his *Book of Servants' Characters* Simpson was accustomed to catalogue his 'people' in sketches so hard and incisive that they were referred to only by number. The recent discovery of the key to this priceless anthology has opened up a treasure trove of 'Characters'—Simpson's perhaps no less than the others—to the scrutiny of posterity.² It is safe to say that Andrew Colville, in effect if not in fact, shared the key to this treasury.

There are two or three casual letters of Simpson's, written on his departure from London and from Montreal, which reveal a spirit of adventure still almost boyish in its exuberance,³ but there are few traces of immaturity in the *Journal of Occurrences*. Mastery has already become a habit. A characteristic note of Colin Robertson's describes 'one of the most pleasant little men I ever met with, full of spirits, can see no difficulties, and is ambition itself, and if he has a fault, he requires the bridle more than the spur'. Robertson's complacency was soon to pass, for this 'pleasant little man', as we shall see, could 'act with firmness' in the Council of the Northern Department and made 'an example of Colin Robertson to begin with'.⁴ Simpson left London little more than an expert in accounting, a shrewd man of business and affairs, gifted with abounding health and sanguine temper. He closed his first year in Rupert's Land at the head of its most important Department and heir apparent to an empire in the fur trade.

2

The same necessity which had forced the Hudson's Bay Company to appoint a Governor in Chief, *locum tenens*, in Rupert's Land, forced the Colonial Office itself to belated action. The Company had succeeded at last in penetrating the inscrutable partisanship of Henry Goulburn and 'the *under* friends of the North-westerns', and in enlisting the direct intervention of Bathurst himself. The first despatch to bear Bathurst's own signature is dated 19th January, 1818.⁵ An appeal was made to both companies to keep the peace. Instructions by the Hudson's Bay Company to their servants in Rupert's Land were supplied

¹ 20th May, 1822, *Selkirk Papers*, 7587.

² See Douglas MacKay, *The Honourable Company* (American edition), Indianapolis, 1936, ch. xiii.

³ 'Three Simpson Letters', ed. Muriel R. Cree, *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, April, 1937, pp. 115-21.

⁴ Simpson to Colville, 27th July, 1823, *Selkirk Papers*, 7951.

⁵ *Selkirk Papers*, 6713.

to the Colonial Office for transmission with official despatches by way of the United States. Bathurst responded by entrusting to Simpson similar instructions for the winter partners of the North West Company at Fort William.

The new Governor in Chief *locum tenens* was duly accredited and 'introduced to the Board' on 26th February, 1820, and sailed from Liverpool on 4th March in the *James Monroe*. He was in New York on 6th April and in Montreal on 28th April. A month later, on 28th May, he delivered the instructions from Bathurst to North West headquarters at Fort William, only to learn of the departure, 'a few days before', of J. D. Campbell and his fellow-partners with a force of sixty men on the way to the Grand Rapid. For two of them, Leith and Keith, as well as for Simpson himself, the capture there of Colin Robertson on June 29th was to have far-reaching consequences. It was the cast of the die for Simpson in Rupert's Land, and all three of them were soon to meet in the Athabaska. Simpson had been instructed to 'return by the Ships of this Season' (1820) unless his services were 'of essential importance'. After Colin Robertson's capture¹ the need was obvious. The decision of Governor Williams 'to require Mr. Simpson's Services' was 'readily assented to'. A fortnight later at Norway House Simpson was 'on the eve of starting' for the Athabaska,² and the first entry in his *Journal* is dated at the Rock Depot on 30th July.

3

The story of the following months must be traced in the luminous pages of the *Journal* itself. Simpson's original rank and mission were probably known at this time to Williams alone. The Committee in London had underwritten his 'general knowledge of Business and the information which he has been able to acquire here of the Company's affairs'. Of the first there was never a doubt, but the second could scarcely have included the tactics of the 'War in the Athabasca'. In the presence of these veterans Simpson professed himself a greenhorn—a 'mange de larde' with the 'vanity to think that the system will soon be improved'. With good friends to help him he could never 'learn earlier', and he might still win 'some little credit altho' yet a "Pork Eater"'.³

¹ There is a suggestion that Robertson's capture was due to 'want of precaution' assumed 'purposely' since 'his own affairs required his presence at Montreal'. Williams to H.B.C., 29th July, 1820.

² *H.B.C. Arch.*, D/1/2/ fo. 26; A/10/2/ fo. 242.

³ For spelling cf. p. 45. Cf. also 19, n. and 53.

It is not on record that friend or foe ever abused George Simpson's novitiate with impunity. His first entry in the *Journal* has a remedy for the 'exorbitant Wages' of the Canadians. A few days later he finds Clarke selecting 'the most useful men' of the brigade for his own post at Ile-à-la-Crosse, and has a remedy for that too. More than a hundred 'pieces' of goods for the Athabaska had to be left at Norway House through 'scarcity of men'—mismanagement which nearly brought disaster in the following April. Sixty of the 'pieces' at least had been supplanted by 'passengers' who ought never to have left their posts in the up-country. Mr. Lewes foregoes his 'gay Light Canoe, manned by eight or nine smart Canadians' in order to get 'every piece' of his trading goods to his winter post—the only instance (Simpson observes) of a District Master in the Canadian establishment having so far laid aside self importance for the Interest of his Employers'. At Portage de Traite, the divide between the Saskatchewan and the Churchill, this greenhorn has a project for a new route to York Factory by way of Split Lake to 'save about one month in the Voyage out & in' for the Athabaska. At Portage La Loche (Methy Portage), the divide between Rupert's Land and the Athabaska, the novice like the mariner crossing the line for the first time has to 'treat the men with an extra dram' or submit to 'the unpleasant process of shaving'. The *voyageurs* name the spot 'le campement de Monsr. Simpson'. Again and again he begs Governor Williams to have the 'pieces' packed at York Factory for each post during the winter instead of consigning them 'higledy pigledy' to Fort Wedderburn, where more than a hundred men for the remoter posts were detained for eight days while their trade goods were made up in the midst of 'incessant clamour, confusion and uproar'. The North West canoes, he notes, brought in 'at least one-fourth more cargo' through expert packing alone. By this time the 'greenhorn' has a grasp of the fur trade which no district master ventures to dispute. During the winter the ink froze upon his pen within four feet of the fire-place. When his stores were exhausted he parted with 'a full suit of my own Clothes' to keep a Chipewyan Chief from going over to the Nor' Westers. By November all his 'superfluous Beef is vanished' and he can 'eat white fish as well as any Voyageur in the Country'. By April there are 'emaciated countenances' and stark fears of starvation, but the 'mange de larde' has long since become a seasoned veteran.

The qualities which commended Simpson to Colvile and the Company are not far to seek in this remarkable *Journal*. Hard-bitten thrift is to be found—perhaps designedly—on every page. An anthology could

be compiled from Simpson's homilies on 'Oeconomy'. At Fort Wedderburn the Indians were 'much pleased' with three-quarters of the usual credits. Andries at Harrison's House 'promises to be more oeconomical in future'. McVicar at Great Slave Lake learns that 'Oeconomy must now be the order of the day . . . Beaver is the sole object of our mission to these Northern regions'. 'It is by the number of Packs alone' that the Company can 'appreciate the Talents of their Traders'. 'Oeconomy must be studied', he writes to Laronde at Colville House; 'tis Furs we now want'. Even Duncan Finlayson's thrifty soul, in charge of the Peace River district, bows to the 'Oeconomical system' of George Simpson.

During the deadly rivalry between the two fur companies the Indians took 'advantage of the Opposition' and were 'completely spoiled'. The white man too drove his bargain, and 'exorbitant wages' were the order of the day. 'Had we a good stock of spirits', Simpson reflects after a dance to celebrate his arrival at Fort Wedderburn, 'it would work down these extravagant wages, the small quantity sold last night amounts to £43.' If a 'dance & drink' were 'absolutely necessary', he wrote in an attempt to 'curb the extravagance of Mr. Andries', it might provide a 'good opportunity of re-engaging' the men at reasonable wages. In his first express to the Governor he bespeaks an 'abundance of trifles to suit their palates and fancies and lighten their pockets'. There were not ten gallons of rum in store, whereas 'a sufficient quantity' would have disposed of '¾ths of their Wages'. He admires one 'thrifty amazon' who contrived to hoard up 200 whitefish while everybody in the fort was on short rations. He wrangles like a fishwife with Charles Thomas over his wages and concludes with this precious specimen of Simpsonian 'smoothing': 'pray do not give the censorious an opportunity of saying that you drove a hard bargain with me'. Any district master who could drive a hard bargain with George Simpson deserved a career in the fur trade. Here was a new technique to be enforced, if necessary, by new and deadlier weapons. Clarke's stubborn folly at Ile-à-la-Crosse inspired this reflection:

'The N. W. Co. are not to be put down by Prize fighting, but by persevering industry, Oeconomy in the business arrangements, and a firm maintenance of our rights not by the fist but by more deadly weapons. Mr. Clarke's bullying system appears to me childish and ridiculous, the expense is enormous, in the article of Spirits alone. . . He would sacrifice both Compy. and their affairs to gain the title of "Bon Garçon".'

In a more formal *Report on Athabasca District* at the end of the season, the results are resolved into pounds, shillings and pence, prefaced by the

sardonic reflection that 'Philanthropy is not the exclusive object of our visits to these Northern regions'.¹ For the Athabaska proper (including Fort Wedderburn, Harrison House, and Berens House) there was an increase of £726 12s. 4d. in furs and a decrease of £1,054 9s. 11d. in expenditure. At Great Slave Lake the Nor' Westers had 30 'gay stout Canadian Voyageurs' with 140 'pieces' of 90 lbs. each, while the Hudson's Bay brigade numbered 'three Wrecks of Canoes, manned by 12 half starved, ragged miserable wretches' with 40 'pieces' of 60 lbs. each. The returns nevertheless showed a reduction of £183 11s. 6d. in the losses. The Peace River District² under Finlayson—the scene of Colin Robertson's campaign of 1819-20—showed a decrease of £2,551 10s. 7d. in the losses of the Company.³ The losses in the Athabaska were still ruinous, and many of the men 'not worth their Victuals', but there was 'an ample harvest in Store for those who weather the Storm of Opposition'. 'I venture to predict', he concluded modestly, 'that the Trade of the Department will in the course of Two or Three Years repay the heavy losses already sustained and thereafter prove a very lucrative concern.'

4

Simpson's adroitness in management, which became a byword in the Company after the coalition, is to be seen in primitive simplicity in the Athabaska campaign. Of his own men, his Chipewyan allies, and his enemies alike, his estimates are hard and censorious, illuminated here and there by tact or a flash of humour, but as a rule tempered to steel by the nature of the conflict.

For Williams and Selkirk, whose death is so exultantly announced to him by the Nor' Westers during the winter, there are signs of real attachment. There is a word of praise for Brown's sterling loyalty marred by a 'harsh and uncourteous address', for Miles' 'valuable services', for McVicar's sturdy courage, 'unjustly calumniated' after the campaign of 1819-20.⁴ There is real concern for Giasson and Finlayson and the fishermen at the Big Island under almost indescribable privations. Old Greill with his 'frail fair one' is addicted 'to the Bottle'; Simpson

¹ 'Beaver is the grand bone of contention.'

² Fort St. Mary's, Colville House and Fort de Pinette.

³ 'There never was such a disgraceful mass of confusion . . . Fortunately for the Company's interests . . . Mr. Robertson did not return to the Country last Fall.'

⁴ 'As honorable, active, brave, and zealous a Servant as any in the employ.'

admonishes him 'as an old Soldier against the stratagems of the Enemy'. As a 'Fort Hunter' Bisson was 'the best without exception in the North'; but his 'temper is capricious . . . I have made his little boy a present'. Lamallice's peculations had to be winked at because his wife (the 'thrifty amazon') was 'the best Interpreter in the Fort'; but his sins would 'rise in judgement against him at the Depot'.

With the Chipewyans themselves, and with St. Pique and O'Hara—seduced from the Nor' Westers—Simpson's guile is not pleasant to reflect upon. Clarke he treats with what tact he can command in his correspondence and with almost ungovernable fury in his diary. There was to come a day of reckoning with John Clarke's 'stubborn folly'. His scathing opinions of the Chipewyans are tempered when the furs begin to come in—five packs from Lazette's band alone, 'the finest Derouine . . . ever made' by the Company in the Athabaska. A 'salute of Fire arms and hoisted flags', a medal and a suit of his own clothes, were all brought into requisition because there was not enough rum 'to give them a complete bouse'. 'On the whole (he concludes) I am much pleased with our few Indians.'

The war against the Nor' Westers is of course the central theme of the *Journal*. His own iron discipline is relieved by humour and cajolery ('flattery is a very cheap commodity'), but no terms are harsh enough for the 'Bullies, Halfbreeds and blackguards of all descriptions' under Simon McGillivray, Jr., and Samuel Black in the North West 'Watch House close to our Stockades'. 'They threw open the gates of Janus (he remarks) before I had time to exhibit my pacific disposition.' Simpson's pacific disposition towards Leith and Keith and McGillivray and Black and 'that consummate villain Soucisse' is not in evidence in the *Journal*. The quarrel over the stockades and boundary line, the appearance of Grignon with a convenient warrant about which Simpson himself confessed to 'private doubts', the arrest in October of Simon McGillivray Jr.,¹ McGillivray's imprisonment at Fort Wedderburn and final escape in December, the tug of war when the Indians began to appear with their winter's furs, are all set down in a spirit of indomitable resolution. In retaliation for McAulay's surrender of Hudson's Bay stores in the campaign of 1819-20 Simpson sees 'no good reason why we should not repay ourselves. . . . Five good Packs of McKenzie River Beaver deliverable at the Grand Rapid Portage would about indemnify us.' Fearing the worst from the Nor' Westers for Giasson's mission to the Rocky Mountains, he contemplates a plan for putting 'a

¹ 'Mr. Grignon collared him' while Simpson himself 'shewed the example by loading my double barrel'd gun and pistols with Ball.'

stop to their villainous career ' by ' taking their whole Northern Brigade down to York ' by the short cut over the Burntwood route to Split Lake. ' If you have any delicacy on that head ', he writes to Governor Williams, ' I shall gladly volunteer my poor abilities.' He reminds old Greill that arms in the Athabaska are ' not for show alone, but absolute service if necessary '—a change of technique which Black and his ' bullies ' can understand. Once only is he down, a prey to ' the vexations, misery and anxiety ' of an unequal contest. The poverty of their stores with ' neither Officers, Men, Goods or Dogs fit for the Trade ' inspires nothing but ' heartfelt despondency '. But Lazette's ' derouine ' changes all that, and despite the starvation which stares them in the face there is ' not a grumble in the Fort '. On the way out in June his men are ' nearly worn out with hunger & fatigue ', and one of them is so mutinous that Simpson himself has ' to plunge into the Water, and drag him ashore ' to enforce discipline. At the Grand Rapid he is still on guard against his enemies, and his only regret at the coalition is that his ' Opponents have not been beaten out of the field '.

V. COALITION : THE BEGINNING OF AN EPOCH

I

By 1820 the two fur companies and the Colonial Office itself had reached an impasse from which there was no escape except by some constructive compromise.

As early as 6th February, 1817, after the atrocities of Seven Oaks, Bathurst had granted for the first time an interview to Berens, the Governor of the Company, and had suggested ' the expediency of making some arrangement with the North West Company, upon which His Majesty's Government might bring a Bill into Parliament '. Goulburn, however, added the comment that the claims of the Company—chartered rights within the Hudson Bay watershed and the concession of the Athabaska to the North West Company—afforded ' little prospect of any amicable arrangement ' at that time.¹ The ensuing ' War in the Athabasca ' was calculated to modify the views even of Ellice and his ' *under* friends ' in the Colonial Office. Selkirk, upon his return from Montreal, was amazed to find that the other members of the

¹ To Berens, 12th February, 1817, *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/8/1/, *Letter-book*. Under this term the official correspondence between the Company and the various departments of the Government will hereafter be cited.

Cabinet were in complete ignorance of Bathurst's devastating despatch of 11th February, 1817.¹ 'Let the question be fairly brought before the King in Council', he begged of Sidmouth, for 'thorough and impartial investigation'.² Within a few weeks of Selkirk's death in April, 1820, another interview between Bathurst and Berens resulted in formal briefs from both parties 'for the Decision of His Majesty in Council'. Goulburn himself in an interview in June with Sir James Montgomery, Selkirk's brother-in-law, urged 'the expediency of a compromise without obliging the Council to decide, because he thought the decision might be unfavourable to both . . . Government might be disposed to go into and confirm any arrangement the Parties might make between themselves.'³

By this time the plight of the North West Company no longer warranted the complacency of 1811 or the 'arrogance & violence' of temper which Selkirk had encountered in Montreal in 1815. With neither the technical reserves nor the limited liability of an incorporated company, the loose partnership, 'outfit' by 'outfit', between the 'winterers' and the Montreal agents was not equipped to withstand a losing trade. William McGillivray himself conceded that their rivals in the Athabaska 'brought their goods to the Indian Country at less than one half the Expence that ours cost us'. The North West partnership was due to expire with the outfit of 1822. The summer conference of 1820 was the scene of an open conflict between William McGillivray and many of the partners led by Dr. John McLoughlin and Angus Bethune. The growing distrust for the Montreal agents on the part of the winter partners—'McGillivray's Geese', one of them had called his fellows—reached a pitch which threatened to destroy the Company.⁴ Overtures had already gone forward to Colvile, but the Nor' Westers were 'unable to get what is due to them from the Montreal houses'. In November, 1820, McLoughlin and Bethune with powers of attorney for no fewer than eighteen of their fellow-partners transferred their negotiations to London, crossing the Atlantic, by a curious coincidence, on the *Albion* with Colin Robertson. A note from Berens to Bathurst announcing Robertson's arrival in London is

¹ See above, p. xxviii, and the author's *Selkirk*, p. 160.

² *Selkirk Papers*, 5890.

³ *Id.*, 5966.

⁴ Cf. Wm. McGillivray to J. G. McTavish, 15th July, 1820: 'He and those whom he got to join him, make themselves ridiculous. . . . We are likely not to be unanimous in making a new agreement. The people here are a strange sett.' *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, ed. Wallace (the Champlain Society), 317 f.

the last official correspondence between the Company and the Colonial Office before the coalition. It is reasonable to suppose that the negotiations of the ensuing month or two followed confidential channels of personal intercourse, and it is necessary to trace the closing phases of the coalition from private sources in the *Selkirk Papers and Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

Four months before Selkirk's death, Edward Ellice, brother-in-law of Earl Grey and Member of Parliament for Coventry, had sought to forestall the revolt of the winter partners¹ by confidential overtures to Colvile for the purchase of the Hudson's Bay Company at their own valuation, with 'the same support' to the Settlement as Selkirk himself 'had promised them'. This was submitted to Selkirk, whose scathing reply quickly disposed of the project. Lady Selkirk added that it was 'merely a question between money and principle'. Ellice, however, was not to be rebuffed. He wrote of 'losses and ultimate ruin which must inevitably result from the continuation of this contest'. McLoughlin and Bethune lost no time in getting into touch with Colvile in London;² and Ellice, now reinforced by Simon McGillivray, redoubled his efforts. It was Colvile's opinion after the coalition that 'nothing but the rebellion of the winter partners, and the expiration of their partnership, could have induced MacGillivray to submit as he has done'. In January, 1821, both Colvile and Halkett were able to outline to Lady Selkirk the terms of settlement substantially in their final form; but the tug of war between Pelly and Colvile on one side and Ellice and McGillivray on the other came to a deadlock after much 'bullying', until Pelly arranged a private meeting ('all a hum') between Colvile and Simon McGillivray alone. 'Simon Pure and I', wrote Colvile at last, 'settled it in a quarter of an hour. . . . We retain the power of management and get paid for our stolen goods, and they kiss the rod.'³

¹ 'One of Mr. Ellice's objects may have been to use this negotiation as a means of influencing the Wintering Partners . . . as they would have been at the mercy of the agents had he acquired a majority of the H.B. Stock.' Colvile to Gale, *Selkirk Papers*.

² *Correspondence Book* of Colin Robertson, January, 1821, *Doc. Rel. to the N.W.C.*, p. 319.

³ *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle. Cf. Colin Robertson's *Corr. Book*: 'You must not set me down as a McGillivray man, or attack my principles when I confess candidly, that I like Simon much better than his friend the Member of Parliament; there is a sort of highland pride and frankness about the little fellow that I don't dislike. He has no blarney about him.' *Doc. Rel. to the N.W.C.*, p. 320. Cf. Ellice's evidence in *Report from the Sel. Com. on the H.B.C.*, 1857, p. 324: 'Lord Bathurst . . . sent for me to consult me whether

1 SIMPSON'S ATHABASKA JOURNAL

'What say you', wrote Halkett to Lady Selkirk, 'to going out next summer to Montreal to see them all put together into this whitewashing tub and purified?'

On 24th February the agreement was 'not yet signed but the heads are agreed to and the lawyers are preparing the papers'. The ponderous indenture of 10,000 words was finally signed on 26th March, 1821, not without a pang to the agents of the North West Company. 'The Fur trade', wrote William McGillivray, 'is forever lost to Canada. . . . I was the first English Clerk engaged in the Service of the N.W. Co. on its first Establishment in 1784, and I have put my Hand and Seal to the Instrument which closes its *career*—and *name* in 1821.'

2

The terms of the agreement were calculated to confirm McGillivray's gloomy forecast.¹ For the Hudson's Bay Company, for the Charter itself, and for the fur trade by way of Hudson Bay, the coalition of 1821 opened a new epoch.

'The whole Fur Trade' was to be united 'into one Concern, to be from the 1st day of June next carried on solely by and in the name of The Hudson's Bay Company'. The management of the trade was to be left to a Board consisting of two members from each party to the agreement together with the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Company. The two concerns were to provide equal shares of capital;² and the profits for twenty-one years were to be divided into one hundred shares of which twenty were to go to the old Hudson's Bay shareholders, twenty to the North West 'parties of the second part', five to the heirs of Lord Selkirk, five to the London agents of the North West Company,

it was possible to do anything towards promoting a union between the companies. I undertook that matter, not only at his request, but from obvious considerations of interest. . . . After a very difficult negotiation, I succeeded in uniting the interests of the various parties . . . under the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company.'

¹ The index to the indenture of 26th March, 1821, between the Hudson's Bay Company and William McGillivray, Simon McGillivray, and Edward Ellice is to be found in *Doc. Rel. to the N.W. Co.* (ed. Wallace), pp. 321-26.

² In effect H.B. control of stock was assured. 'If the Gov. & Co. shall be in advance beyond their share of Capital', it was provided that 'All Interest payable to the parties of the second part and twenty Shares of the profits may be retained by the Governor and Company for defraying deficiency in their Share of the Capital with interest'.

forty to the Chief Factors and Chief Traders of the Company in the interior,¹ and the remaining ten to be reserved for contingencies. The trade in the interior was to be under the immediate supervision of two Governors, one of the Northern and one of the Southern District. The appointment of Williams and Simpson ensured the closest co-ordination between the fur trade in America and the policy of Hudson's Bay House,² though the personnel of Chief Factors and Chief Traders was recruited, as we shall see, chiefly from the ranks of the North West winter partners. Three years later a new indenture further readjusted the balance in favour of the old Company. The five 'shares of profit' to the London agents were commuted to Hudson's Bay stock. The management reverted from the clumsy Board to the old Committee of directors, with Edward Ellice alone of the old Nor' Westers upon the Committee. By this time, however, Simpson at Norway House could boast that 'our new allies are the most staunch H.B. men we have now got',³ and 'Bear' Ellice himself was to become for forty years the most resourceful champion of the Hudson's Bay Charter.

In the end perhaps the most significant results of the coalition were to be found in its bearing upon the Charter and upon the fur trade in the vast areas beyond the chartered territory claimed by the Company. In that sense the Government itself contributed perhaps more than either of the contracting parties to the coalition of 1821. In the brief presented to the King in Council in 1820 the North West Company of course had impugned the validity of the Charter at every point. In 1815 Bathurst and Goulburn had not hesitated to pronounce the claims of the Hudson's Bay Company 'to say the least of it extremely doubtful'.⁴ An Act of Parliament was now passed (1 & 2 Geo. IV, c. 66) which not only implied the validity of the Charter for Rupert's Land but authorized a Licence, renewable in twenty-one years, for 'the sole and exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians' over the whole of British North America 'not being part of the lands or territories heretofore granted to the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading to Hudson's Bay, and not being part of any of our provinces in North America'. Prince Rupert himself had never contemplated so vast a monopoly.

¹ In accordance with the Deed Poll of 1821. The total amount of the forty 'shares of profit' was divided into eighty-five parts of which each Chief Factor was to receive two and each Chief Trader one.

² *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/1/52/.

³ *Selkirk Papers*, 7668.

⁴ To Berens, 12th April, 1815, *Letter-book*, *H.B.C. Arch.*

In the realm of jurisdiction and self-defence the reversal of official policy was complete. Early in 1818 Berens had broken at last the restraints of official intercourse in a scathing indictment of Bathurst himself at the Colonial Office. The Company had begged some 'measure not of vindictive justice but of precaution and police' by way of Canada for the Settlement: 'the request was not granted.' They had volunteered to defray the expense of similar protection by way of Hudson Bay: 'it was refused.' They had outlined a plan of self-defence consistent with the Charter: Bathurst had expressed his 'decided objection' and 'we were warned against adopting this measure'. For two years the chartered rights of the Company had been before the law officers of the Crown: 'the result of this reference was promised . . . but we have never been able to obtain it.' Meanwhile chartered rights had been flouted, the Settlement twice destroyed, and more than a score of lives had been lost.¹ Under the alchemy of coalition the Charter now came at last into its own. In May, 1822, Pelly forwarded to Bathurst the measures adopted by the General Court 'to administer Justice agreeably to the Law of England in conformity with the powers vested in them by the Charter', and also 'to arm and inroll some of their Servants and of the Inhabitants . . . in aid of the civil power'. Bathurst in reply sanctioned the regulations as 'well calculated to preserve the peace and good Government of that part of North America under the Jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company'.² The jurisdiction of the Company remained until the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada in 1870.

For settlement in Assiniboia the coalition of 1821 was an ominous portent. Founded in the throes of conflict and left almost a derelict by the death of its founder, the Red River Settlement in purpose and function had stood as the citadel of chartered rights in Rupert's Land. If monopoly in the fur trade at the coalition was the result of 'the War in the Athabasca', the survival of the Charter in the widest amplitude of its history may fairly be attributed to the tragic vicissitudes of Selkirk's project at Red River.

For a decade and a half after the coalition Lady Selkirk and Halkett,

¹ Goulburn to Berens, 12th April, 1815, *Letter-book*; Berens to Bathurst, 6th March, 1818, *Selkirk Papers*, 4503 ff.

² 'His Majesty does not deem it expedient to issue an immediate Commission under the Act of 1st and 2d Geo. 4 cap. 66 . . . and until His Majesty shall constitute Courts and Justices under the said Act the Resolutions of the 29th inst. appear well calculated . . .', etc. Bathurst to Berens, 31st May, 1822, *Letter-book*, *H.B.C. Arch.*

Selkirk's brother-in-law, loyally maintained the Selkirk tradition. The fur trade was almost uniformly hostile. Simon McGillivray, as was to be expected, carried forward 'the most rancorous hostility to the settlement'. 'Every Gentleman in the Service both Hudson's Bay and North West', added Simpson, was 'unfriendly to the Colony'.¹ Nicholas Garry who visited Red River in 1821, Colville himself in London, and Simpson in Rupert's Land, were all agreed that without regulation and control it might 'ultimately ruin the Trade'.² Plague and flood added their toll. Halkett, as one of Selkirk's executors, visited Red River in 1822; and Colville, to do him justice, shared loyally with him and with Lady Selkirk the defence of the Settlement against its critics in the fur trade. The retirement of supernumeraries and their families from both companies after the coalition had been 'the cheapest mode of relieving the fur trade of a ruinous expence'. The Committee would not allow 'the fur trade to oppose or oppress the Settlement'.³ In 1823 the Company's Chief Factor and the Roman Catholic bishop were added to the 'grumbling senators' on the Council of Assiniboia. Under Donald Mackenzie's able administration as Chief Factor and Governor of Assiniboia prosperity at last returned. By 1829 'peace and plenty (wrote Simpson) may be said to be its motto'. Simpson's sudden enthusiasm was not perhaps without finesse. Convinced of 'the prosperous state of the Colony', the sixth Earl of Selkirk acceded in 1834 to the 'desire expressed by the Committee' to have Assiniboia transferred to the Company. The 'five shares of profit' of 1821 and the grant of Assiniboia were converted into Hudson's Bay stock. The direct control of the family over the Red River Settlement came to an end.

For the cherished monopoly of the fur trade the transfer was barely in time. Private traders from the United States had already appeared upon the border. The reign of primitive 'peace and plenty' at Red River was soon to be broken by 'the fight for free trade in furs'. The

¹ *Selkirk Papers*, 7397, 7623.

² 'It is not my province to enquire into the object of establishing this Settlement and I sincerely wish it may meet the objects and views of its patrons, but can assure you that it at this moment injures the affairs of the Company very seriously.' Simpson to Colville, 20th May, 1822, *Selkirk Papers*, 7600.

³ Colville to Simpson, 11th March, 1824, *Selkirk Papers*, 8148. For the separate status of the colony and its relations with the Company, see *H.B.C. Arch., Gen. Letter Books*, Gov. and Comm. to Simpson, 11th March, 1824, paraphrased in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, Harvard Historical Studies, 1931, p. 250.

westward movement of population into the north central states—more than two millions of people in a single decade—sounded the knell of the Simpson regime. With growing contacts to the south there could be but one outcome to the conflict between settlement and fur trade. Here at last was to be found the most distinctive function of the Red River Settlement. The deluge of migration which swept into Texas and Oregon was stayed at Fort Garry. Vested interests of settlement at Red River proved to be the bulwark of British dominion at its most vulnerable point against the march of 'manifest destiny' south of the boundary. Under Sir Edmund Head a reorganized Hudson's Bay Company that knew not Simpson was no longer able to withstand that deluge. Simpson himself lived to see the Select Committee of the British House of Commons recommend that 'the districts on the Red River and the Saskatchewan' be 'ceded to Canada on equitable principles'. The primitive project which had brought Selkirk to his grave in 1820 found its ultimate destiny in what the Marquis of Dufferin once called 'the keystone of the arch' of sister provinces across the Dominion.

4

For the fur trade the coalition of 1821 ushered in the golden age. The reorganization of 1824 in London virtually restored the technique of the old Committee under the Charter, leaving the McGillivrays and Ellice alone responsible to the partners and creditors of the old North West Company. It was found that the affairs of McTavish, McGillivrays and Company in Montreal, though reorganized in 1822 under the name of McGillivrays, Thain and Company, were in hopeless confusion. Their insolvency and the death of William McGillivray in 1825 marked the passing of the St. Lawrence fur trade. Even with Sir George Simpson in state at Lachine, the Montreal Department was but an adjunct to the Great Monopoly. For the fur trade as for many another aspect of Canadian enterprise the seductive empire of the St. Lawrence was to end in disillusionment and frustration. Forced farther and farther westward and northward by one eventuality after another—by the surrender of the Indian posts after Jay's Treaty, by the War of 1812, by the Astor interests incited by Colin Robertson himself¹—the attenuated life-line of the Canadian fur trade snapped at last at Red River and in the Athabaska. Physiography and shrewd business

¹ *H.B.C. Arch.*, A/10/1/216 ff. 'He is determined to oppose the N.W. Co. on every point within the American Lines, and to render the Hudson's Bay Co. every assistance in his power.'

enterprise alike favoured the Hudson Bay route. In 1836 the sixth Earl of Selkirk himself was a guest of Simpson at Hudson's Bay House, Lachine, near Montreal. By that time 'Simpson's plan of turning everything into the Bay channel'¹ had been vindicated by nature itself as well as by the coalition. For another quarter of a century the commercial empire of Hudson Bay remained a marvel of lucrative fortune and efficiency. With the passing of the Simpson regime and the sale to the International Financial Society in 1863 this dream of empire too passed away, and the fur trade bowed at last before the march of agricultural settlement from Canada and the United States.

In Rupert's Land and the vast areas beyond, the transition at the coalition was more difficult. Three days after the signing of the Deed Poll of 1821 Nicholas Garry, one of the old Hudson's Bay Committee who happened to be 'the only single Man' upon the new Board, left for Rupert's Land upon a mission of adjustment and conciliation. His fellow-commissioner was Simon McGillivray whose 'cunning and address', wrote Simpson, 'put Mr. Garry completely on his guard'. Under Garry's shrewd and benevolent influence Governor Williams was able to report 'universal satisfaction, confidence and unanimity'.² 'Our old opponents', added Simpson, 'no longer received us as enemies but met us as acquaintances which I think will soon assume the character of Friendship.' No fewer than fifteen of the twenty-five Chief Factors and seventeen of the twenty-eight Chief Traders in the Deed Poll of 1821 were old Nor' Westers. Simpson's old rival Leith went back to the Athabaska. Angus Bethune went to Moose, and Colin Robertson to Norway House. In due time even Cuthbert Grant and Samuel Black were 'smuggled quietly into the Service again'. When Simpson and Black came face to face 'he remembered my Athabasca campaign (noted the Governor) and never will he forget the terrors in which he was kept that winter. We parted excellent friends.' The old Nor' Westers were soon the staunchest 'Company's men' in Rupert's Land, though a few of them soon began to suspect that they were 'beginning to be ruled with a rod of iron'.

The new technique of the fur trade itself was scarcely more than George Simpson's thrift and indomitable resourcefulness in the Athabaska campaign projected over the whole range of the Company's monopoly. He had seen with his own eyes the wastage of competition, the duplication of trading posts, the depletion of fur reserves, the steady

¹ Sixth Earl of Selkirk to Lady Selkirk, Lachine, 5th September, 1836, *Correspondence* at St. Mary's Isle.

² *H.B.C. Arch.*, D/1/4/7d.

deterioration of Indian and trader alike under the twin blight of rum and extravagance. Within three months of taking over the Northern Department Simpson decided to 'lop off' £15,000 of the £60,000 for wages, 'for which purpose it will be necessary to discharge at least two hundred and fifty men'.¹ In 1822 there was a veritable exodus of supernumeraries and their families from the fur trade into retirement at Red River. 'Oeconomy' could now be enforced without extenuation. For a time the new regimentation gave 'mortal offence to the Indians, a settled and sullen melancholy seems to have arrested their exertions. . . . The scenes of extravagance are at an end.' With the passing of credits and rum the Indian trade settled into a hard lucrative technique based upon 'habits of industry' and a 'proper state of subordination'. 'However repugnant it may be to our feelings', wrote Simpson, 'I am convinced they must be ruled with a rod of Iron'. The *canot du Nord* carrying twenty-five 'pieces' was supplanted where possible by the York boat carrying from sixty to eighty. As the Governor's Scottish thrift permeated the service, dividends rose from 4 per cent. on capital stock of £103,950 in 1821, to 10 per cent. on £400,000 in 1825, 20 per cent. in 1828, 23 per cent. in 1836, and 25 per cent. in 1838 when the licence of monopoly was renewed.² Here, as Simpson had predicted from the Athabaska, was the 'ample harvest in Store for those who weather the Storm'. The old Company was a 'very lucrative concern'.

5

For Simpson himself the coalition was the door to fortune. Governor of the Northern Department in 1821, Governor in Chief in 1826, knighted in 1841, a host to the Prince of Wales a few days before his death in 1860, Simpson probably combined the widest range of authority with the widest range of territory and the longest tenure of power ever enjoyed by one man in North America. One of his disgruntled subordinates once added a fourth distinction: 'Making every allowance for Sir George's abilities, he is evidently one of those men whom the blind goddess "delighteth to honour".'³ It is true that fortune had presented him with spectacular chances: with the favour of Andrew Colville in London, with his first commission *locum tenens* after the

¹ *H.B.C. Arch.*, D/4/1/ p. 20.

² Douglas MacKay, *op. cit.*, 342 f.

³ John McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*, ed. Wallace (Champlain Society, 1932), 383 f.

indictment of Williams at Montreal, with the capture of Colin Robertson at the Grand Rapid which forestalled his return to England, with the Athabaska campaign which gave him his first mastery of the fur trade, and with the coalition which found him the most acceptable candidate for the command of both parties. Few, on the other hand, have ever seized fortune, after the Machiavellian precept, with more briskness and audacity.

Simon McGillivray's attempts at proscription at the coalition were quietly baffled by Garry's shrewd benevolence, but the transfer of Williams to the Southern Department was an obvious necessity. Simpson's commission, though technically junior to that of his old chief, was replaced upon Williams's recall in 1826 by the Governorship in Chief over all four principalities of the fur trade—the Northern and Southern Departments of the Mackenzie River and Hudson Bay watershed, the Montreal Department in the east, and the Columbia and New Caledonia west of the Rocky Mountains. Beyond these again were frontiers of the fur-trading empire in the Sandwich Islands, China, and the Russian outposts from Alaska. Simpson's systematic mastery of this vast concern, reinforced piecemeal by first-hand inspection, was the work of the next five years. He spent much of 1821-22 with J. G. McTavish at York Factory, amalgamating no doubt the best features of North West and Hudson's Bay technique for the new empire. He returned in due time for a ruthless inspection of the Athabaska. The record of his journey to the Columbia in 1824-25 has already appeared in the brilliant *Journal* edited by Professor Merk.¹ When the Committee created him Governor in Chief in 1826 it added an authoritative tribute which none could gainsay:

'We consider the Fur Trade is very much indebted for its prosperous state to your talents for distinct businesslike arrangement, and to your indefatigable zeal and perseverance. . . . We consider that you have acquired a more perfect knowledge of the Indian Trade than perhaps was ever possessed by any one Individual or even by any body of Men who have been engaged in it.'²

It may suffice for the purposes of this Introduction to leave him there. Much of the hard ruthlessness of these early years was mellowed by success and by the genuine humanitarianism of Harrison and other 'pious' influences on the Committee. Simpson's precepts to others were never more exacting than his own practice. He drove others no harder than he drove himself, and he drove the crew of his North canoe

¹ *Fur Trade and Empire*, Harvard Historical Studies, 1931.

² 24th December, 1826, in Merk, *op. cit.*, 285 f.

no harder than he was accustomed to drive his Chief Factors and Chief Traders in the fur trade. His own physical vigour must have been phenomenal. Years afterwards when Sir George was an 'old man', young Moberley describes the usual early start of the North canoe at one o'clock in the morning, and Simpson's 'pernicious custom' of a morning plunge even in the midst of 'mixed snow and rain'. On his journey to the Columbia in 1824 he reached the Pacific in eighty-four days from York Factory, 'thereby gaining Twenty Days on any Craft that ever preceded us'. Ten days he saved by the Burntwood and Split Lake route he had recommended in the *Athabaska Journal*. At the Frog Portage he overtook John Clarke who had a start of eighteen days from York Factory. A few days later he catches Dr. McLoughlin still in camp at seven o'clock in the morning: 'his Surprise and vexation' after 'having a 20 Days start of us from York is not to be described'. Nothing pleases him more than these little demonstrations of efficiency: except perhaps the innumerable exploits of 'smoothing' with which the traditions of his long rule in Rupert's Land abound.

In the 'smoothing' of the old feud between Hudson's Bay and North West many vestiges of the Athabaska campaign are finally liquidated. Simpson's settlement of accounts with John Clarke and Colin Robertson was perhaps characteristic. 'It never occurred to the new concern', protested Robertson, 'that such men as John Clarke and Colin Robertson were in existence. . . . The N.W.C. have gained a complete victory for the best places.' The disgruntled subordinate already mentioned afterwards charged Simpson in this with a 'cold and callous heart'—'all the craft and subtlety of an intriguing courtier' combined with 'the prepossessing manners of a gentleman'.¹ These, as Douglas MacKay justly observes, are not true colours.² Simpson was not without guile, but the journals and the correspondence with Colvile may fairly be left to tell their own story. When Clarke disappeared (1824) in a light canoe for a few days of diversion at Norway House leaving his brigade in the hands of inexperienced subordinates to suffer loss of several 'pieces' in the rapids, Simpson's thrifty soul vowed vengeance in open Council, and he was as good as his word. The 'pieces' were charged to Clarke's private account.³ When Colin Robertson in the Council of the Northern Department (1823) led a cabal against the Settlement, and 'in order to make himself pass for a man of weight came out with all their

¹ McLean, *op. cit.* (ed. Wallace), p. 383.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 207.

³ Merk, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Cf. Clarke's Journal of 1819-20 in J. J. Hargrave, *Red River*, 1871, Appendix B, 491 ff.

secrets', Simpson seized the 'opportunity of bringing them to their senses . . . gave them a lecture . . . made them look on each other with suspicion and restored their confidence' in himself:

'No man (adds Simpson) ever took greater pains or labour to please and give satisfaction than I have done, but . . . a Saint could scarcely keep them in humour . . . I found it necessary to act with firmness . . . and made an example of Robertson to begin with . . . With these men I find nothing does so well in the long run as candour and plain dealing, it may not be palatable at times, but must ultimately prevail, and finesse should never and will not be resorted to by me except in extraordinary cases.'¹

With this passage at arms it may be assumed that 'the little Emperor' has come into his own. There will be no more finesse 'except in extraordinary cases'. Like Sir Anthony Absolute, no one will be more easily led when he has his own way.

It is curious to reflect that while Colborne and Durham, Sydenham and Bagot and Metcalfe, Elgin and Sir Edmund Head, were struggling with the growing-pains of self-government in the old province of Canada, there lived at Lachine, during intervals from travel, a man who wielded the sceptre of an autocrat over an empire five or six times the area of all the other provinces combined. Simpson's activities in the Bank of Montreal and other aspects of Canadian finance, in shrewd investments for his 'people' in the fur trade, in measures against the Papineau rising and other issues of that alien bailiwick, have almost completely eluded the historians of Canada. For many years he was the dean by right of tenure among the governors of British North America, and the empire which he ruled with such mysterious efficiency was the oldest continuously British territory on the continent. Sir George Simpson is perhaps the greatest figure yet to be essayed in Canadian biography.

¹ Simpson to Colville, 8th September, 1823, *Selkirk Papers*, 8011.

JOURNAL OF OCCURRENCES
IN THE ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT¹
BY GEORGE SIMPSON
1820 AND 1821

July 1820

30th, *Rock Depot*,² Sunday. Governor Williams,³ having July
been pleased to invest me with the charge of the Athabasca 1820
Departmt. in the absence of Mr. Robertson, I have abandoned
my intention of returning to England this season, in the hope
that my presence in the Interior may be of some advantage to
the Company's affairs in that quarter, and I intend that the
following Journal shall give an accurate and unbiassed report
of the principal Occurrences that may take place within my
observation.

Mr. Miles has hitherto been occupied in arranging the
different Outfits,⁴ and finishing the accounts of last year, and
for some days past my time has been employed in re-engaging
the people assisted by Mr. Clarke; to this Gentleman I am
particularly indebted for his polite attentions, he has given me
much useful information, and his influence over the Canadians⁵

¹ The contemporary spelling 'Athabasca' will be retained in the Journal; in the notes the modern spelling 'Athabaska' will be adopted (Geographic Board of Canada, *Eighteenth Report*, p. 22).

² See Appendix A.

³ See Appendix B.

⁴ The trade goods for any one particular year, including goods for use at the post as well as for barter with the Indians. The 'Indent' for Outfit 1821-22 will be found on pp. 141 ff.

⁵ The general name for French Canadians: when opposed to the term 'English' it often means a servant of the N[orth] W[est] C[ompany] as opposed

July has been exerted with great success, as notwithstanding the
 1820 exorbitant Wages they have now exacted, I am confident that
 they are lower by one fourth than any other Gentleman in the
 service could have engaged them at. I am of opinion that in
 future the contracts of both Officers and men should be
 renewed Inland in the course of the Winter, instead of delaying
 it until their arrival here, as when they find that we absolutely
 require their services, they take advantage of their market, and
 hold out for most extravagant terms, which has been dearly
 exemplified this season.

This establishment¹ is still in it's infancy, and therefore
 the business is not yet conducted on such a regular system as
 could be desirable, but under Govr. Williams's active and
 discerning management, I am satisfied that little room will
 be left for improvement in the course of another season.

[fo. 2] Previous to this date all our Canoes have taken their de-
 parture for Norway-house where much remains to be done,
 as many of the people are still unengaged, and until our
 Complement of men is determined, it is impossible to arrange
 the Outfits for the different Posts. On my departure Govr.
 Williams handed me the following instructions: vizt.:

'ATHABASCA 1820: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1st. The officers selected for the several Posts, are per-
 fectly competent for the charge, unless it be found expedi-
 ent from any change of arrangement to alter the Posts:
 length of services and capability must be observed to prevent
 Jealousy.

2nd: Should the new Caladonia expedition not reach it's
 destination this year from the lateness of the season, it will be
 advisable that two canoes should proceed with the Outfit
 already selected, under the Officers appointed to it, early next
 Spring.

to a servant of the H.B.C. The plan for pushing the trade of the H.B.C. into
 Athabaska was held to necessitate the services of Canadian voyageurs, 'the best
 voyageurs in the world,' and John Clarke was held to be particularly good at
 handling these Canadians (see Appendix B). Cf. Introduction, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

¹ *I.e.* the Athabaska Department.

3rd. To make such arrangements as are deemed necessary and prudent, to establish McKenzie's River next year. July 1820

4th: As a precautionary measure to ensure goods for the summer trade, and prevent the posts being left destitute, orders should be issued to District Masters¹ in charge of Outfits, to select and lay aside a certain portion of Ammunition, tobacco, cloth, and liquor expressly for this purpose, which is not on any account to be touched; from the present Outfits being so liberal, it can be afforded.

5th. It will be necessary to leave a respectable Summer establishment of Men inland, and to avoid as much as possible bringing out *more Guides* than are necessary for the conducting of the Brigade.² *No Interpreters* are to come out that are engaged, and as *few Officers* as possible, and to check the inconvenience but too much felt, of *Women and Children* as Passengers.

6th. To give Instructions to the Officer in charge of Peace River, to make as many Canoes as possible, and that the Steersmen be directed to bring with them for the repairs of the Canoes on their Voyage: Bark, Pitch and Roots,³ and not to trust to Cumberland House for any of these supplies.

7th. Should any quantity of Salt be procured, one Keg to be put in each canoe coming out.⁴

8th. To leave four men and a Superintendent to improve the Portage at Lac Laloche in such a way that Horses and Carts may be employed to convey Goods across, Spades, Pick Axes, and other utensils should be sent with the men; could a Fisherman⁵ be spared it would be advisable to send

¹ Cf. Note 2, p. 47.

² A 'Brigade' was a flotilla of canoes travelling together.

³ Roots of pine, spruce and other trees, used principally for sewing birch bark canoes. Known as Wattape or Watap. Cf. pp. 13, 63, n. 1, etc.

⁴ The salt would be procured from the Salt Springs on the Athabaska River, twenty-five miles north of the Forks, or from Salt River, a small western branch of the Slave River.

⁵ Many establishments of the H.B.C. had to rely largely on the fish which they could catch for their subsistence. The best fishermen were recruited from the Orkneys.

July one to support the Party; some pemican¹ may be sent a² Isle
1820 ala Crosse.

9th. As a good supply of men will come up from Canada³ next year, none but the very best men should be engaged inland, their terms must be left discretionary with the Chief of the Department, who will issue orders on this head to those under his command.

10th. To issue orders respecting accounts to be kept as per form sent out and forwarded in 1819.

11th. Not to permit any intimacy or intercourse with the N.W. Coy. establishments.

12th. The greatest care ought to be taken when Expresses⁴ are about to depart, and to select some very trusty and confidential man to leave the Fort in the Night with two Sleds on different tracks, one to return after having gone some distance. A good way to secret Letters to put them in a Frozen fish, and some sewn in duplicate in a Canadians Capot.

13th. To come out from the Interior as early as possible.⁵

14th. As Mr. Clarke has directions to send Twenty bags of Pemican to Portage Laloche next Spring, should it be deemed necessary, a part of this might be sent for by a Canoe

¹ A food preparation used in North America. It consists of buffalo or other lean meat dried and pounded into shreds, Saskatoon berries are sometimes added and the meat is then packed into skin bags which are filled with hot melted grease. When cold and hard, it can be preserved for years. Cf. Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 346-7.

² The word 'a' in the MS. is presumably an error and should read 'from'; see Item No. 14 of these Instructions.

³ Montreal was the chief recruiting centre of the Canadian voyageurs, upon whom the H.B.C. was relying for success in Athabaska. Canadians asked high wages, so although in 1819 'a good selection of experienced men' was recruited in Canada, and a hundred (here referred to) were ordered from Montreal in October 1820, the Company decided to send none in 1821.

⁴ Parties who carried correspondence between posts in light canoes or on dog sleds, in contrast with the 'Mail' carried by the brigades.

⁵ The Company's ship generally left York Factory on Hudson Bay at the end of August or at the beginning of September; thus the furs reached London by the end of the autumn. The N.W.C. route *via* Canada and the Lakes took much longer. Cf. Introduction, pp. xviii and xxx.

as soon as the Waters are open from the Athabasca Lake,¹ to be placed as occasion dictates.' July 1820

Embarked at four O'Clock P.M. with Mr. Miles in a Light Canoe, accompanied by Messrs. Clarke & Pensonnant in another. Encamped at eight O'Clock.

31st, Monday : Heavy rain during the night, and the morning cold and raw; Left our encampment at day break. Passed Lamallice's Brigade in the Rapids. Arrived at Swampy Lake Depot at seven O'Clock P.M.; Lamallice came up with us about nine O'Clock.

August 1820

1st, Tuesday : Embarked about two O'Clock A.M., overtook Messrs. McDonald² & Oxley at six; Met the Montreal Canoe that had gone by Red River³ in Knee Lake;⁴ sent it to Swampy Lake for six pieces goods belonging to the Northern discovery Expedition⁵. Engaged an Iroquois to guide it for fifty Livres.⁶ Encamped at eight P.M. in Knee Lake. August 1820

2nd, Wednesday : Detained in our Encampment by heavy rain until six A.M. Arrived at Oxford-house about one P.M.

¹ A lake 200 miles long and thirty-five miles wide at its widest point: it receives the Athabaska River at its south-west end and discharges its waters into the Slave River.

² Probably Neil McDonald. See Appendix B.

³ The Red River rises in western Minnesota near the sources of the Mississippi. It flows across the states of Minnesota and North Dakota and into the Province of Manitoba, where it falls into the south end of Lake Winnipeg after a course of about 665 miles.

⁴ A very irregularly shaped lake about forty miles long, on Hayes River, between Oxford Lake and Swampy Lake.

⁵ The first expedition for the exploration of the Arctic Coast, led by Lieut. (afterwards Admiral Sir John) Franklin, R.N., which sailed from Gravesend on 23rd May, 1819, on the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales*. Both the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. promised to help the expedition, and Governor Williams was ordered to select guides and to make arrangements for food, canoes and other necessaries. A 'Piece' or 'Pack' was a package of standard weight. Colin Robertson spoke of a piece as 80 lbs. of provisions or 90 lbs. of furs, and Simpson ordered all pieces to be made up to 80 lbs. But the piece sometimes weighed no more than 60 lbs. Cf. pp. 188, 191, 256, 258, 313, 369.

⁶ For currency standards see n. 1, p. 186.

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August where we halted for the day, in order to make some arrange-
1820 ments. Directed Mr. Oxley to remain until the return of the
Canoe sent to Swampy Lake, and bring Mr. McMurray the
Prisoner under his charge to Norway Ho:

3rd, Thursday: Left Oxford House at two O'Clock A.M.
[fo. 3] Encamped at the upper end of White fall Portage.¹

4th, Friday: Embarked at three A.M. and encamped at eight
O'Clock P.M.

5th, Saturday: Left our encampment at three O'Clock A.M.
Came up with Brunelle's² Canoe who was unable to keep
Company with Magnions Brigade, in consequence of his wife
being taken in labour on the march two days ago; both she and
the child are doing well, and she already assists in paddling in
order to make up for lost time. Arrived at Norway-House at
six O'Clock P.M. Learnt that Mr. Finlayson took his de-
parture from thence for Peace River, accompanied by two
Canoes intended for New Caladonia on the 2nd Inst., but I fear
the latter cannot reach their destination this season; it was
arranged that they should meet Mr. Giasson at the Rocky
Mountain³ Portge. on the 20th prox., but that is almost im-
practicable.

6th, Sunday: Magnion the Peace River Guide arranging his
Canoes. Monsr. Demouline the Priest from Red River per-
formed Divine Service; this Gentleman's exhortations seem
to have little effect on the Canadians, I understand however that
he lays them all under contribution, and will make a profitable
trip of it.

7th, Monday: The Canoes are in a very crazy state and
Magnion going on with the repairs. Captn. Oxley arrived
with Mr. McMurray; sent the latter Gentleman to encamp on
an Island opposite, as his presence here would be inconvenient.

¹ A portage, now called Robinson Portage, near White Water, or Robinson, Lake.

² Probably Jean Baptiste Brunelle, a Canadian employed by the H.B.C. as a bowsman. He joined the H.B.C. in 1816, was in Montreal in 1818, and was in Athabaska 1819-20, and in the Peace River District 1820-21.

³ A portage on the Peace River about 120 miles south-east of Dunvegan. Its length was estimated by Simpson to be about thirteen or fourteen miles. Cf. p. 391.

8th, Tuesday : Engaged a few men. Their terms are most August
extravagant. Occupied writing my Letters for England the 1820
greater part of the day. Gave the people a dance in the Evening.

9th, Wednesday : No work done to day, the Guides and men
in a state of inebriety. They purchase spirits of the English
Servants,¹ but I have requested Mr. Sutherland to put a stop
to this disgraceful traffic, as it is productive of serious inconven-
ience to the service; he has given intimation that a repeti-
tion of the offence will be severely punished.

10th, Thursday : Lamallice employed in repairing his
Canoes; he complains of the quality of the Bark, and scarcity
of Gum. Arranging our men for the different posts. Mr.
Clarke has got nearly all the best hands for Isle ala Crosse. I
expostulated with him on the impropriety of selecting the most
useful men for any particular District without avail. He does
not seem to take a general view of the Company's Interests, but
confines his attention to the District which he individually
superintends: If the Governor would take the trouble of
appropriating the men, and determining the quantity of goods
for each Department, it would prevent much altercation be-
tween the Officers.

11th, Friday : Messrs. Oxley & Andries took their depar-
ture for Athabasca Lake. Magnions Cargoes delivered to him,
and ready to start from the Point² tomorrow Morning. I am
under the necessity of leaving upwards of a Hundred pieces of
goods here in consequence of the scarcity of men, so that I fear [fo. 4]
it will not be possible to establish any new posts this season.

12th, Saturday : Magnion detained at the point by contrary
wind; Lamallice still occupied in repairing his Canoes, some

¹ The English servants, recruited in England, got less wages than the Canadians, but the latter were charged far more for the goods which they bought from the Company, and which consumed nearly all of their wages. When the 'English servants', getting their goods at 75 per cent. above prime cost, sold goods so bought to the 'Canadians' who would otherwise have to pay 300 per cent. on prime costs (and were paid proportionate wages), the Company was seriously hit. The abuse had called for remonstrance from Williams. Trade by servants was also an infringement of the Company's monopoly.

² The point of land projecting into Lake Winnipeg south-east of Norway House. From here the canoes started on their journey across Lake Winnipeg.

August of them are in such a bad state, that I suspect they cannot reach
1820 their destinations; the Cargoes I fear will sustain much damage.

13th, Sunday : Many of the Canadians have actually bartered their shirts & blankets for Rum with the English servants. Magnions Brigade is unable to proceed, and all work at a stand: every man in the camp being more or less intoxicated. I caught an Iroquois in the act of selling a fathom of cloth¹ for half a pint of Spirits. Mr. Sutherland has got the names of two of his men who were also detected to day, and I hope they will be made an example of: the most effectual way of stopping this illicit Trade is by forwarding the allowances of the English Servants inland as Cargo, and serving it out to them at their Wintering Grounds. Our Provisions getting short, and if the Brigades are detained another day, I fear the allowance will be insufficient for the Journey to Cumberland; Magnion has applied for an additional supply, but we have none to give him, he had one and a half bag of Pemican for each canoe on the 11th., a great proportion of which is already consumed.

14th, Monday : Magnions Brigade at the Point wind bound. Lamallice's canoes arranged, gone to the Point with their Cargoes, and ready to take their departure, passengers Messrs. Greill, Chastellain & McDougald, also two Esquimaux for the Northern discovery expedition;² O'Doherty and Cochrane sent by Mr. Clarke's Boats,³ as we could not give them a passage in the Canoes, without leaving about ten pieces of goods, which we cannot afford in the present limited state of our supplies. Much inconvenience is experienced by having so many passengers in the Brigade, and I shall endeavour to remedy this evil next year by taking none out except those who are determined to retire from the service, the room which our passengers occupy this season would have enabled us to bring upwards of sixty pieces more goods than we now have. Mr. Clarke has nearly as many goods for the District of Isle ala

¹ Possibly trade goods pilfered from the canoes.

² The two Eskimos, Tattanoek (The Belly) and Hoeootoerock (The Ear), belonging to Franklin's expedition reached Fort Enterprise on 27th January, 1821. The names of Augustus and Junius were bestowed on them at Churchill.

³ These were York boats, not canoes. Cf. p. 12, n. 1.

Crosse as we have for the whole Department of Athabasca; I August
sincerely trust he may bring them to a good Market; those 1820
who know his character as a Trader, have their doubts on that
head. Previous to my departure from the Depot,¹ Govr.
Williams gave me an order on Mr. Lewis for one of the Lesser
Slave Lake Canoes, in the event of it's being absolutely re-
quired for the use of the Athabasca Department; on looking
particularly into the state of our affairs, I found that an addi-
tional canoe would be of very essential importance, and there-
fore was under the necessity of presenting the order, altho' I
know that Mr. Lewis had not an overstock of goods; I am
however glad to find that he will not suffer more than a little
personal inconvenience by the arrangement, as instead of travel-
ling to his Post in a gay Light Canoe,² manned by eight or nine
smart Canadians, which is too much the fashion in this service;
he very prudently laid empty show aside, converted his travel- [fo. 5]
ling Equipage into a vehicle of burden, and with the assistance
of a boy undertook the Voyage in a small Indian Canoe, thereby
securing for the use of his post every piece that was originally
intended for it: Mr. Lewis deserves much credit for this con-
vincing proof of his zeal; it is perhaps the only instance of a
District Master in the Canadian establishment³ having so far
laid aside self importance for the Interest of his Employers.

15th, Tuesday: The Brigades started from the Point this
morning with a fair wind. Mr. Miles closing the Athabasca
accounts.

¹ I.e. Rock Depot, where Governor Williams was in July, 1820.

² Several sizes of canoes were in use in the fur trade. The most used were (a) the North or light canoes, which were about 25 ft. long and 4 ft. wide in the middle. They were more suitable for express than for freighting purposes, but the N.W.C. used this type of canoe as general carriers; (b) Montreal canoes or canoes du Maitre. These were twice the size of the North canoes and were employed for rapid transport where the waters would allow it. On canoes see G. C. Davidson, *The North West Company*, pp. 216-8; F. Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 345-6; and the *Diary of Nicholas Garry*, *Trans. Royal Soc. of Canada*, Sec. II (1900), pp. 93-4.

³ Simpson uses the terms 'Canadian' and 'English' in various senses; he speaks of the 'English Establishment' as Rupert's Land, so that the 'Canadian Establishment' presumably means Athabaska, Ile-à-la-Crosse and Lesser Slave Lake. Cf. p. 407.

August 16th, *Wednesday*: Preparing to start for Athabasca tomorrow morning. Wrote the following Letters: vizt.:

NORWAY HOUSE 16th August 1820.

To WM. WILLIAMS ESQRE.,
Governor in Chief of Ruperts Land.¹

SIR,

I have the Honor to acquaint you that the Athabasca and Peace River Brigades took their departure from hence yesterday morning: much time has been lost from the want of proper subordination amongst the people, and it is with the utmost difficulty we have been enabled to bring them to their duty, they now however promise well, and the Guides assure me they will make up for the delay that has taken place. Mr. Clarke has been good enough to make the necessary arrangements with regard to engaging the people and manning the Canoes; our Complement is twelve Canoes navigated by sixty eight men, contg. two hundred and fifty four pieces, which I suspect is far short of what the Department requires, we must however make the most of every thing, and as Isle ala Crosse is overstocked with goods, I expect Mr. Clarke will furnish us with a supply of such articles as we may stand most in need of during the winter. I found it absolutely necessary to make use of your letter to Mr. Bird,² directing him to transfer one of the Lesser Slave Lake Canoes to the Athabasca Department which he has complied with, and I think Mr. Lewis will suffer no inconvenience from this arrangement, as he loaded his own Canoe, and took his passage in a small one to Cumberland, from whence he will travel overland to Fort Waterloo. There is no probability of the New Caladonia Canoes getting beyond Peace River this season, as they did not take their departure from hence until the 1st. Inst.; they were delayed three days here by the misconduct of the people who were in a continual

¹ A term used by the H.B.C. to describe the territories over which their charter gave them control. See n. 3, p. 37.

² James Bird (see Appendix B) was at this time in charge of the Saskatchewan district.

state of intoxication until every article belonging to them, even their wearing apparel, was disposed of to the European Servants for spirits; some check must be put to this disgraceful Traffic, otherways the consequences may be very serious. In the event of the Goods for New Caladonia not getting to their destination this season, I will give directions that they are reserved until the early part of next season, & then forwarded across the Mountain, but if it is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of Peace River District that they should be appropriated to it's use, we must entirely depend upon supplies from hence; I therefore take the liberty of suggesting that you should give directions that the Goods for McKenzie's River, and New Caladonia be packed up separately at York¹ agreeably to the inclosed Indent,² and forwarded by the first open water to this place; and as it is not probable that a sufficient number of people can be engaged in the Interior for the New Districts, I deem it advisable that from twenty five to thirty men should be hired at the Red River³ early in spring in order to make up the seven Canoes, which should take their departure from hence not later than the middle of June. Mr. Bunn has already been furnished with the Indents of Athabasca, Peace River & Gt. Slave Lake Districts, and in order to avoid delay and inconvenience next season, I beg leave to recommend that the goods should be packed up at York-factory in the course of the winter, each District separately, and forwarded early in Spring to the Depot,⁴ which would materially facilitate our operations. The Indents for Peace River, Athabasca, Gt. Slave Lake, New Caladonia & McKenzie's River will require twenty six Canoes, August 1820

¹ *I.e.* York Factory.

² A list sent to the district headquarters showing the goods and provisions required. A regular form was supplied, in which trade goods were listed, and the posts wrote in the amount of each article required. An example of an indent is on p. 141 ff.

³ *I.e.* at the Red River Colony. Until the amalgamation between the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. the number of servants which the H.B.C. recruited at the Red River Colony was small, partly because the settlers were unsuited for the service, partly because the Red River half-breeds had strong N.W.C. sympathies.

⁴ *I.e.* Rock Depot.

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August and two Boats,¹ next year, which I trust you will be able to 1820 furnish, vizt.:

Peace River	-	3 Posts	-	-	-	-	7 Canoes	35 men
Great Slave Lake	3	„ including Hay's River	2	-	-	-	6 „	30 „
Athabasca Lake	3	„	-	-	-	-	6 „	30 „
„ „	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 Boats	14 „
New Caladonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 Canoes	20 „
McKenzie's River	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 „	15 „
<hr/>								
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 Boats - 26 Canoes	144 men
<hr/>								

¹ Already in the eighteenth century boats appear among the means of transport used in the interior by the H.B.C., and a 'flatt boat' is mentioned in the Albany Journal of 1745-46. In 1775 Hearne recommended that boats should be built, and a similar recommendation was made by Turnor three years later. The first substantial use of boats in the interior came in 1795 when, during the absence of his superior in England, George Sutherland 'launched boats into the Saskatchewan, and the bold experienced canoeman who knew the rapids had nothing to learn, but exchanged his paddle for an oar and descended in triumph' from Edmonton to Lake Winnipeg. In the early nineteenth century the Committee tried to foster the use of boats instead of canoes, sent out models in frame from England, and instructed the Governor to get more made, and by 1820-21 boats were in quite common use. Simpson's *Journal* shows them in use at Carlton House and at Ile-à-la-Crosse (pp. 8, 18, 34), and Simpson intended to introduce them into Athabaska. Their main advantage over canoes was that they were more economical in man-power (cf. p. 402). Shaped like a whaleboat and propelled by oars or a tracking-line (or by a sail when crossing a lake and when the weather allowed it) they carried from fifty to sixty pieces with a crew of only six or seven men. These were the 'York' or 'Inland' boats. The chief difficulties in introducing them into Athabaska were presented by Portage la Loche and by Rivierre la Loche. The road at the portage was long and difficult—Sir Alexander Mackenzie found it by measurement to be 11½ miles, and this was checked and proved correct in 1888 by T. Fawcett, D.L.S.—and the river had insufficient water in the dry season. Simpson therefore ordered Clarke to keep the Portage la Loche road in order, and ordered that horses and carts should be supplied to take the boats and their cargoes over the portage. He also urged that the boats should be sent out early in the open-water season, so as to find plenty of water in Rivierre la Loche (cf. pp. 35, 38, 137, 263).

² The H.B.C. post on Hay River was not established in 1820-21, and never was established, probably owing to the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. The N.W.C. had a post on Hay River for several years,

From the scarcity of goods this season, I fear it will not be possible to reserve any part of our Stock for the Summer supplies, I therefore conceive it will be necessary to dispatch the boats from hence on or before the 1st. of June; I shall take care that the road over Portage Laloche, is put into tolerable repair, and Mr. Clarke undertakes to furnish Horses and Carts, so that no difficulty can arise in transporting the Boats and their cargoes across the Portage. August 1820

All our Canoes for the interior are in a wretched state, there was not a sufficient quantity of Bark, gum and roots for their Repairs, and I fear the goods will in consequence get damaged, to avoid this evil next year, I beg the favor of your giving directions that fourteen Canoes may be furnished from the Saskatchewan; Mr. Clarke will provide six, and a sufficient quantity of Bark, Gum & Roots is required for ten or twelve more from Swan River, Lac La Pluie &c., in order that some of the Guides may be employed here in making and repairing, while the different Brigades are at the Depot for their Cargoes; and if a canoe shed could be erected during the Winter, it would be very important not only for the preservation of the canoes but that the building & repairs may not be delayed by unfavourable Weather. If Boxes could be furnished for the fine goods, it would prevent the risk of damage by wet, and about thirty oil cloths will be required for the same purpose, also Thirty canoe Sponges. We have experienced some inconvenience from the scarcity of provisions, the Canoes have no more than one and a half bag of Pemican each to Cumberland, and if they have a tedious passage the consequences may be serious; to prevent a repetition of the evil, I trust you will order a sufficient quantity for next year. It is most desirable that our men should expend as much as possible of their enormous wages when in this part of the country, you will therefore no doubt see the propriety of sending an abundant supply of such things as are likely to suit their palates & fancies to the Depot. Mr. Andries arrived here on the 6th. Inst. from Cum-

[fo. 6]

but this was withdrawn during the season 1819-20. Simpson proposed that the Hay River post should be settled six days' march across country to the north from Colville House. Cf. p. 386.

August berland, and took his departure for Athabasca with Mr. Oxley
 1820 a few days ago, he has explored the Rein Deer Lake Route,¹ but finds there is not sufficient water for boats or Canoes, he met the NW² Peace River Brigade near Cumberland about the 1st. Inst., so that they have got much the start of us, and I am under some apprehension that our Brigade will not reach it's destination before the Frost sets in, which would be a most unfortunate circumstance.

By accounts received to day from Red River, the N.W. are most formidable; I anticipate a very troublesome winter campaign, and if any serious disturbance takes place, I will give you timely notice, in order that we may bring them to account, as they come out in Spring, I shall get here as early as possible, and trust you will be prepared to retaliate and resent any violence or outrage they may commit in the course of the season: my conduct must be entirely regulated by circumstances, I shall avoid as much as possible any collision with them, but will with firmness and determination maintain the rights and interests of the Honble. Company, and defend their property and our persons by every means within our power. They will no doubt be on the outlook for you at Cumberland, but I beg leave strongly to recommend that you take up your quarters at York this Winter, and that you will be in readiness to support us at the Rapid³ if necessary in the Spring.

Permit me to return you my warmest acknowledgements for your polite and friendly attentions and with much respect, I have the Honor to be, Sir,

Your most Obedt. Humble Servant,

(signed) GEORGE SIMPSON

¹ A route from Norway House to Athabaska *via* Reindeer River, Reindeer Lake, Wollaston Lake, and Black Lake, reaching Lake Athabaska at its eastern end.

² Unless obviously used as a direction, N.W. means the North West Company.

³ The Grand Rapids just above the outlet of the Saskatchewan River into Lake Winnipeg. Here was the obvious scene for an encounter between the two companies. See Introduction, pp. xxxviii-xl and *infra*, pp. 16, 72, 124, 215.

TRoublesome Winter Expected 15

NORWAY-HOUSE, 16th August, 1820.

August
1820

Messrs. MAITLAND, GARDEN & AULDJO,¹
Montreal.

GENTLEMEN

I had the pleasure of receiving your much esteemed Letters of the 4th. & 6th. Instant, with their inclosures by Captn. Oxley. I now beg leave to hand you a list of the Servants going to Montreal with a statement of the balances due to them; also a note of Bills drawn on your house from the Rock Depot amot. £458/15/6 Sterlg., and from Norway House p £153/18/0, which I request may be duly honored; likewise a few Memorandums from Mr. Spencer, the Accountant, which Mr. Forest will have the goodness to pay the necessary attention to. I am now so far on my way to Athabasca, where we expect a troublesome Winter's campaign. Permit me to return you my best thanks for your polite attention while at Montreal and with much respect, I remain,—Gentlemen—Your most Obedt. Servt.,

(signed) GEORGE SIMPSON

NORWAY-HOUSE 16th August 1820

COLIN ROBERTSON ESQRE.,
Montreal,

SIR

Herewith I beg to enclose some Letters which I was anxious to deliver you in person, one particularly from Mr. Colville which only came to hand a few days ago; Mr. McDonald² promises to take particular care of them, so that I trust they will not fall into the hands of the Enemy. Mr.

¹ A Montreal firm of merchants appointed agents for the H.B.C. in 1815. They had no previous experience of the fur trade and were appointed because it was thought necessary to fit out the Athabaska expedition of that year from Montreal and to have a house there to recruit Canadians and to handle the business of the expedition: there was no more competent house which was not suspected of North West sympathy. In 1820 they were given powers of attorney to collect debts due to the H.B.C. at Montreal.

² Alexander McDonald. See Appendix B.

August Miles forwards a packet which I received from Mr. Marsh¹
 1820 at Liverpool. I hope you will pay the North West off for all their good and friendly actions: your capture has given me an Athabasca campaign, where I trust you will soon relieve me; Mr. Clarke accompanies me as far as Isle ala Crosse, our Canoes are in the water and on the eve of starting, which I hope will be a sufficient apology for this hurried scroll.—I remain, Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEORGE SIMPSON

Delivered my Letters for England to Mr. Sutherland, and those for Canada to Mr. Alexr. McDonald.

17th, Lake Winipic, Thursday: It is currently reported that the N.W. intend to obstruct us at the Grand Rapid, we have therefore provided our people with a musket and bayonet each and ten rounds of ball cartridge, and armed ourselves for the purpose of Self defence; thus equipped I started from Norway-house at five A.M. with Mr. Miles in a canoe manned by nine stout Canadians, accompanied by Messrs. Clarke, McDonald & Pensonnant in another with the same compliment of men. Put ashore to breakfast at nine, re-embarked at ten after gumming the Canoe, and at twelve were compelled to land by strong head wind; Mr. Clarke's canoe being quite light was enabled to proceed, whereas mine was deeply laden and had nearly swamped before we got ashore. The gale continuing we encamped for the night.

18th, Entrance of Grand Rapid—Friday: Blowing hard all night.—Embarked at four A.M., and came up with Mr. Clarke at eleven. Breakfasted and got to the foot of the Grande Rapid at ten P.M., when we landed and sent two men across the [fo. 7] Portage to reconnoitre; Gave the people a dram (the Canadians require an auxiliary of this kind in time of danger) arranged our arms, and sat up all night, as we suspected the N.W. Half-breeds were laying in ambush for us.

¹ Partner in the Liverpool firm of Marsh and Robertson, of which Colin Robertson and his brother were also partners. They supplied the H.B.C. with a certain amount of trade goods from 1815 onwards, but Robertson's absence in Canada and other circumstances ultimately caused their bankruptcy. Robertson then found that Marsh was his chief creditor.

19th, *Lac Bourbon*¹—*Saturday* The men who were sent August across the Portage last night returned at three A.M., and in- 1820 formed us that the coast was clear. Embarked and landed opposite Martin,² the Freeman's³ lodge; this fellow is a N.W. spy; he addressed us very politely and attempted to play the Sycophant, but Mr. Clarke gave him what is vulgarly called 'a good blowing up'; near his lodge is a pile of stones, heaped up in a conical shape to the memory of Benjamin Frobisher, where a board had been erected on a Post with the following epitaph: 'To the memory of Benjamin Frobisher who perished on this spot 22nd. Novr. 1819, in escaping from York Factory; where he had been most unjustly detained by the Servants of the Hudsons Bay Coy.' The board was however removed a few days ago. Crossed the lower Portage, about three miles; at the upper end Ploueff the Freeman⁴ has a lodge, a decent fellow attached to our cause; from him we learnt that Messrs. Leith, Keith, Simon McGillivray and an Army of Clerks, Interpreters, Halfbreeds and Canoe men, loaded with arms and threatening destruction to the Hudsons Bay Coy. had passed a few days ago, he also informed us that our Brigade had passed the Portage on the same day in Company with the N.W.; in our Canoes were five pieces goods belonging to the Northern discovery Expedition, which the N.W. had previously agreed with Lieut. Franklin & Governor Williams, should be taken into their Brigade whenever they might fall in with each other in the course of the Voyage; Lamallice (the Guide in charge of the Brigade) being aware of the arrangement, considered this a favorable opportunity of delivering them, and accordingly gave them in charge to the N.W. Guide, but Mr. Leith afterwards refused to take them, and they were

¹ Also known as Cedar Lake, a lake about thirty-five miles long, situated about four miles N.E. of Lake Winnipegosis. It is an expansion of the Saskatchewan River.

² Not identified, probably a retired servant of the N.W.C.

³ A man whose term of service with one or the other company had expired and who remained to trade and hunt on his own account. Both companies often relied on freemen to provide them with much of their pemmican in the interior.

⁴ Not identified.

August accordingly left at Ploueff's lodge; the remainder of the N.W. 1820 Brigade being expected to pass the Rapid in the course of a day or two, Mr. Miles wrote a note to the Officer in charge explaining the circumstances of the case and requesting he would embark them. Breakfasted and by twelve the canoes and baggage were transported to the upper end of the Portage: Gummed & Embarked. Broke our canoe in the Red Rock Rapid,¹ lost an hour in repairing the damage. Sailed through Cross Lake.² Got to the head of the Saskatchewan Rapids³ at seven P.M. Passed through the narrows of this Lake, (where a Freeman resides) and encamped on an Island at eleven P.M.; this is considered a good days march:—the Weather more sultry than I have yet experienced it.

20th, *Saskatchewan*—*Sunday*—Embarked at three O'Clock, got through Lac Bourbon; and at nine came up with the Isle ala Crosse Boats, Mr. O'Doherty and Cochrane passengers for Athabasca, the former had some conversation with Mr. Johnstone,⁴ a N.W. Clerk at the Grand Rapid, from whom he learnt that Mr. Wm. McGillivray had brought authentic accounts from England of the Earl of Selkirks Death,⁵ and produced the Montreal Herald⁶ in confirmation thereof, but [fo. 8] I do not give credence even to that high authority, and have no doubt but the report was fabricated by the N.W. Agents, at least I would fain hope so. Breakfasted & re-embarked at ten; the heat very oppressive and after a hard days march encamped at nine O'Clock; the Waters are very high, and the banks of the River inundated, so that we actually floated in our blankets, and were tormented by Myriads of Moscheto's.

21st, *Monday*: The Moscheto's drove us from our Encampment before day break this morning; Breakfasted at ten; Passed the Carlton Boats at twelve, and Mr. Clarke's Brigade

¹ On the Saskatchewan River.

² A small lake on the Saskatchewan River, below Cedar Lake.

³ On the Saskatchewan River, between Cedar and Cross Lakes.

⁴ William D. Johnstone. He was at the Grand Rapid in 1820-21.

⁵ The Earl of Selkirk died at Pau, in France, on 8th April, 1820.

⁶ Founded by William Gray in 1811, and issued twice weekly.

at four P.M., also eight of the N.W. Canoes, and at nine O'Clock August
landed at a similar encampment to last night. 1820

22nd, Tuesday: Embarked at half past three AM; passed fourteen N.W. Canoes; I could not help remarking with much concern the striking contrast between our Brigade and that of our Opponents; all their Canoes are new and well built of good materials, ably manned, a water proof arm chest and cassette for fineries in each, and the baggage covered with new oil cloths, in short well equipped in every respect:¹ on the other hand our Canoes are old, crazy, and patched up, built originally of bad materials without symmetry and neither adopted [sic] for stowage nor expedition; manned chiefly by old infirm creatures or Porkeaters² unfit for the arduous duty they have to perform, the Arms wrapped up in Leather, so that the first shower of rain must damage them, and not more than half a dozen tottered [sic] Oil cloths in the whole Brigade: there is much room for improvement in this branch of the business. Our Guides must have wrought night and day to keep the lead. At four O'Clock observed a half loaded Canoe pushing across the River towards us, it turned out to be Simon McGillivray who merely came alongside to make his observations; This Gentleman I understand has been most active in every nefarious transaction that has taken place in Athabasca, he is notorious for his low cunning, has made Mr. Clarke a prisoner twice, and threatens to have him soon again, he seems to have mistaken his trade, as he possesses sufficient artifice to have ranked high as a tip staff in the civilized world: next to Black he is more to be dreaded than any member of the N.W. Coy.; he was

¹ The H.B.C. was fully alive to the excellence of the N.W.C. equipment. After the amalgamation with the N.W.C., when Simpson was in authority, he maintained this admiration of their efficiency, and under him the H.B.C. borrowed much of its later trading and travelling technique from its former rivals.

² 'Porkeaters', 'Mangeurs de lard' or 'Goers and Comers' were originally men engaged by the N.W.C. from 1st May to 1st October, to travel between Montreal and Fort William or Rainy Lake. Their nickname was derived from the salt pork which was an important item in their diet; they were those who lived on provisions brought from Ontario or Quebec rather than on the country, and the name was generally used in the North West as an equivalent of 'greenhorn'.

August the principal leader of the lawless assemblage of Halfbreeds
 1820 and Indian assassins at the Grand Rapid this season: a day
 of retribution I trust is at hand for this worthy. Continued
 our Route till twelve P.M., as we could find no place of encamp-
 ment, the banks being overflown with water, and came up with
 the whole of our Brigade. Passed some encomiums on the
 Guides and men for their activity, which arose from two causes:
 the spirit of emulation, and fear of starvation as their provisions
 are quite exhausted, the Officers have however prevented the
 Flour bags being plundered:¹ gave a dram to the people and
 supper to the Officers & Guides.

23rd, *Cumberland-House*.—*Wednesday*: All our Canoes
 were in the water this morning at two O'Clock, and I arrived
 here at six A.M. The Brigade encamped on Athabasca Island,²
 where they took in provisions for the remainder of the Voyage.
 Here there is also a scarcity of Pemican; from Norway-House
 [fo. 9] to this place the Canoes had one and a half bags each, and from
 hence to Athabasca they take six bags; their regular allowance
 is Nine Bags for the whole Voyage, *i.e.* from Norway-House to
 Athabasca, and I understand it is little enough, but if under
 that quantity the Flour generally suffers; this however I hope
 will not be the case on the present Voyage, as our quota of that
 useful article is very scanty. Made some trifling alterations in
 the lading and manning of the Canoes, and at two P.M. they
 proceeded on their Route. This we have made a holyday in
 order to recruit our people who are much fatigued.

24th, *Thursday*: It is very fortunate that our Brigade got
 through the Lake yesterday, as they could not have ventured
 from their encampment on Athabasca Island to day on account
 of the unfavourable state of the Weather; we are detained here
 from that cause. The N.W. Brigade I understand passed in
 the course of the night, so that they are close on Lamallice's
 heels. Wrote the following Letter:

¹ Flour had to be most carefully preserved in the interior, as the last resource
 at the posts should fish and other food supplies fail during the winter. Cf.
Journal, pp. 99, 198, 236.

² An island in Cumberland Lake.

CUMBERLAND HOUSE 24th August 1820

August
1820

WM. WILLIAMS, ESQRE.,

Governor in Chief of Ruperts Land.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you that we, together with the Peace River & Athabasca Brigades arrived here in perfect safety yesterday, they proceeded on their Route immediately, and we follow Tomorrow. The N.W. I am happy to learn are not quite so formidable as we had reason to expect, their Lesser Slave Lake and Athabasca fall¹ expeditions amounting only to Twenty Two Canoes: they passed the Grand Rapid the same day that ours did, and the Guides seem inclined to display their marching talents. Magnion's is a few miles ahead of Lamallice's, and the latter keeps the lead of his Brother who is in charge of the N.W. Brigade. Messrs. Leith, Keith, Black, & McGillivray are I understand to be my Opponents at the Lake,² McTavish at Peace River, and Thompson, McDonald (White-head) & Livingston, (the Montreal Sheriffs Officer) at Isle ala Crosse;—we must all be on our guard, and I hope they will have nothing to boast of in my department; Mr. Clarke is prepared to meet them on any terms, and from his superior means and force he cannot fail of giving a good account of them, but in the event of their committing any serious outrage, which we may be unable to resent, we trust much to your powerful assistance in Spring.

The Lighter³ I understand gives them great uneasiness, and it occurs to me that unless a strict watch is kept during the Winter, they may attempt to destroy it; arson is no unusual offence with them, and to prevent any risk in that way it might be judicious to get one of the people about the Fort to live on

¹ *I.e.* autumn.

² *I.e.* At Lake Athabaska, where the H.B.C. Fort Wedderburn and the N.W.C. Fort Chipewyan faced each other in rivalry.

³ The only other mention of this lighter is in a letter from Williams to James Sutherland, 11th March, 1820—'Recollect that James Inkster and Halcro go to Norway House as well as Kirkness to finish the Lighter.' The lighter was therefore presumably at Norway House, and was possibly the answer to Colin Robertson's request that the rivers and lakes should be policed as far as was possible, in order to prevent N.W.C. depredations.

August board. Mr. Lewis met the N.W. Gentlemen at the Grande
 1820 Rapid Portage, and informed them that there were five pieces
 belonging to the Expedition in our Brigade, which were to be
 delivered to them for the purpose of forwarding to Athabasca
 according to previous arrangement, and which he would im-
 mediately deliver, Mr. Leith replied that it was our business to
 carry them to Cumberland, and unless that was done, he would
 take no charge of them. Lamallice however objected to take
 them further, as his canoes were overloaded, and they were
 accordingly left at their risk, where they still remain under the
 care of Ploueff the Freeman: Mr. McTavish's Light Canoe is
 expected in the course of a few days, and I think it is probable
 he may bring them on. I must again take the liberty of re-
 minding you, that it will be absolutely necessary to dispatch
 the Boats by the first open water, with the Summer supplies,
 and beg to annex a note of such articles as will be most im-
 mediately required: If you cannot procure a Guide I shall send
 one of the Light Canoe men back in the Boats when we meet
 them on the track. Our Canoes are in a very bad state, and I
 trust you will give the necessary instructions for an abundant
 supply of Bark, Gum & Roots for next Season; if the wood
 work could be made of Cedar instead of pine it would be a great
 improvement. I have the Honor to be with much respect, Sir,
 —Your most Obedient Humble Servant.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON

Two Boats containing each:

- 15 Kegs Spirits.
- 5 bags Ball.
- 5 bags Shot.
- 5 Kegs Powder.
- 8 rolls Tobacco.
- 2 cases Guns.
- 2 cassettes Twine No. 1 @ 10.¹
- 18 Bales: containing Molton Capots² of all sizes, blankets
 and cloth.
- 60 Pieces.

¹ For making the vitally important fishing nets.

² *I.e.* Made of Molton cloth, a coarse woollen cloth deriving its name from South Molton in Devon.

Mr. Heron¹ is at present in charge here, pays us every mark of attention, and appears an interested valuable Officer. This is by far the best place of residence, I have seen in the country and capable of being made an excellent Farm as the soil is fertile; Mr. Williams has made great improvements already, the Garden produces a variety of Vegetables, and the crops of Wheat, Barley & Oats look remarkably well: the Lake abounds with Wild Fowl & delicious Fish, so that there is no danger of starvation here. It is usual to supply the Gentlemen of the Athabasca Department with a few Tongues² & Dried meat for the Voyage at this place, but this season no other provision is made for them than Pemican, in this respect I think there should be some little distinction made between the Officers and Canoe-men. [fo. 10]

25th, Friday: It has blown hard all day which unfortunately detains us here, but we must make an early start in the morning if possible.

26th, Saturday: *Rivierre Mal-in*.³—Mr. Clarke converted one of the Canoes of his Brigade into a Light Canoe with eight men *for the better accomodation of his Woman⁴ and her Servant*; taking the *Ladies* into his own, and turning Messrs. McDonald & Pensonnant into the other, the Cargo left at Cumberland; this measure is somewhat extraordinary, as I have repeatedly intreated him to bring on some pieces for the use of the Athabasca Department, which he knows is very inadequately supplied with goods, but he uniformly replied: that he requires all his supplies and accomodation for the use of his own District. The Committee may well be displeased when they learn that one of their Officers deliberately puts them to an expense of about £500, exclusive of the injury their business

¹ Francis Heron. Cf. Appendix B.

² Smoked buffalo tongues, a great delicacy.

³ Now known as Sturgeon-weir River; it flows from Amisk (Beaver) Lake into Namew Lake after a course of about twenty-five miles. It was often called Riviere Maligne by the Canadian voyageurs. It is joined by Goose River about four miles from its entrance into Namew Lake.

⁴ Sapphira Spence, a daughter of Joseph Spence by an Indian woman. Clarke was actually married to her and had settled £200 on her. She died in 1821. The italics represent words underlined in the manuscript.

August may sustain by the want of the goods *merely for the accomodation*
 1820 *of an Indian Mistress!!* Mr. Clarke daily loses ground in my estimation yet he has some good qualities; he understands the Trade well, has an extensive knowledge of the country & its resources, will undergo any personal fatigue or hardship when necessary, and does not hesitate to expose his Life in time of danger, and will not stand at trifles in annoying the Enemy: but to indulge his incorrigible vanity, selfimportance and ambition, I verily believe he would sacrifice the Company and all their affairs; it would not however in my opinion be judicious to quarrel with him as yet, unless means are found to Keep him out of the Country while the heat of the opposition continues, as I believe he is sufficiently mercenary to change sides immediately, and from his influence with the Canadians and Indians, and his indefatigable zeal in the cause of revenge, he would be a very dangerous Enemy.

Started at four O'Clock A.M., the three Light Canoes in Company detained at the Entrance of the Grand Traverse from twelve till four by adverse wind and encamped on the Rat Portage¹ at nine P.M., here we found at the further end a N.W. Half loaded Canoe for Lesser Slave Lake, passengers Mr. Henry and one Primeau² (*a Monster*) who made himself very conspicuous in the Red River Massacre; ³ this fellows name is in several Warrants, but we have none in our possession other-ways he would have been secured.

27th, *Pente Portage*⁴—*Sunday*: Started at day break and proceeded up Rivierre Mal-in, very appropriately named as it is a continual Rapid for about thirty miles, the poles in use

¹ A portage on the Sturgeon-weir River, just above the mouth of Goose River.

² Louis Primeau. His name does not appear in the extant N.W.C. accounts. For his participation in the Red River massacre of 1816 cf. A. Amos, *Reports of the Trials in the Courts of Canada relative to the destruction of the Earl of Selkirk's settlement*, London, 1820, p. 85. He died at Allumette on 23rd April, 1831.

³ The massacre of Governor Semple and twenty-one settlers by half-breeds led by Cuthbert Grant and instigated by the N.W.C., in June 1816. Cf. C. Martin, *Selkirk's Work in Canada*, Oxford, 1916, and Introduction, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

⁴ Also known as Spence Portage, a portage 320 yards long on Sturgeon-weir River, five miles above Amisk (Beaver) Lake.

nearly the whole way. Gummed at the entrance of Beaver Lake,¹ where we found Mr. Dears with the Lesser Slave Lake Canoes, and part of the N.W. Brigade, had some conversation with their people, and could have had several Deserters, they appeared much dissatisfied with their treatment at Lac La Pluie;² it appears there was a great scarcity of goods there, and the men could not get their full supplies of necessities; passed through Beaver Lake, and encamped here at eight P.M. Mr. Dears encamped at the Lower end of the Portage. [fo. 11]

28th, *Lac Bouleau*.³—*Monday*: Embarked at day break, crossed Carp Portage, Bouleau decharge, Bouleau Portage, Petit Portage de L'Isle,⁴ and encamped at eight P.M.—

29th, *Entrance of Lac Meuron*.⁵—*Tuesday*: Incessant rain with heavy squalls of wind during the night, and until nine this morning, when we embarked. Made Portage de Pinnette⁶ but the weather became so boisterous that we could not proceed and landed at eleven A.M. where we remained for the day drenched with rain.

30th, *Lac Fort de Traite*.⁷—*Wednesday*: Embarked two hours before day break; passed through Lakes Meuron & Chetique.⁸ Made the Discharge des trois Petit Portagè,⁹ and the Portages of the same name, and breakfasted at the head of these: entrance of Lac du Bois, where Mr. Clarke informed me that one of his men picked up a bag of shot which had been accidentally left on the first Portage by some of the Athabasca

¹ Now known as Amisk Lake, about eighteen miles long and eight miles wide.

² See Appendix A.

³ An expansion of the river a few miles below Mirond Lake, flowing into Sturgeon-weir River.

⁴ The portages on the river between Amisk Lake and Mirond Lake are now known (in order ascending the stream) as Spence, Snake, Leaf, Birch, Dog (Portage de l'Isle) and Crow Portages.

⁵ The extreme north-east part of Mirond Lake.

⁶ Or Crow Portage, just below Mirond Lake.

⁷ Or Trade Lake, the extreme north-west branch of Woody Lake, about three miles long.

⁸ Pelican Lake, between Mirond Lake and Woody Lake.

⁹ Three portages above Woody Lake. Franklin calls them the 'Three portages of the Lake of the Woods'.

August Canoes ahead and that he would not deliver it unless I gave his
 1820 people a Gallon of Spirits, which I considered a most unreasonable demand (value £10 Sterling at the Canadian price) and objected to it with some warmth, which hurt his consequence in no small degree, passed through the Lake and made the Discharge & Portage de Traite,¹ deriving it's name from the circumstance of a Canadian Trader (who had for the first time about fifty years ago penetrated so far to the Northward) meeting the Chipewyans on their Route to the Honble. Hudsons Bay Coys. establishment at Church-Hill,² and fraudulently obtaining their Furs, which they were taking to the servants of that Company in payment of the Credits advanced them the preceding year, thereby introducing a system of deceit amongst the natives with which they were formerly unacquainted. The Waters we have hitherto ascended discharged themselves by Lake Winipic and Port Nelson River³ into the Bay at York Factory, and those we now enter are emitted by the Church-hill River. From hence there is a track to York by the Burnt wood carrying place, Nelson Lake, Split Lake, and Port Nelson River,⁴ which from the information I have collected is less intricate, and materially shorter than that which is now

¹ Or Frog Portage. For the best account of the incident here related see *Journals of Hearne and Turnor* (Champlain Society, 1934), p. 42. Simpson (p. 135) suggested this as a suitable spot for the capture of the N.W.C. Brigade.

² See Appendix A for a brief history of the H.B.C. post at Churchill. This incident took place in 1776, when the Churchill building would be the stone fort "Prince of Wales" on Eskimo Point at the mouth of the Churchill River.

³ The Nelson, or Sea, River drains the whole of the rivers and lakes within the basin of Lake Winnipeg, a basin extending from the Rocky Mountains in the west to within a hundred miles of Lake Superior in the east.

⁴ In 1822 Simpson reported that this route had been carefully examined, and he himself used it in his journey of 1824, and was most favourably impressed by it. Using it, he made the quickest voyage to Ile-à-la-Crosse ever reported (eighteen working days). See Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 5 *et seq.* The route had been first used by boats in 1816, when Nelson House sent its returns to York by this means. "Tomma the Iroquois" explored the route in 1822, preparatory to Simpson's using it in 1824, but in 1825 Simpson decided that the season of open water was too brief to make the route practicable. He himself started his Peace River journey (1828) from York via Hayes River, and in 1835 Chief Trader Donald Ross reported that the Nelson River route had been abandoned in favour of the "common route to and from the factory."

pursued; If it was found advisable to carry on the trade by the August communication alluded to, York Factory might then be the 1820 Athabasca Depot, which would render the maintenance of an establishment at the Rock unnecessary, and save the enormous expense of forwarding goods to the Rock and Norway House, as the Servants whose contracts had expired could bring the Cargoes for the Brigade coming from Montreal to Jack River,¹ and from thence a Guide would be provided to conduct it into the interior by the present track: this arrangement I think would save about one month in the Voyage out & in which is a matter of no small importance. Provisions might in my opinion be furnished with equal facility as at present; at Edmonton House a sufficient number of Horses can be found at a trifling expense to convey the Pemican across by the Moose Portage² to the Beaver River³ in the course of the winter, and from thence the Lesser Slave Lake and Isle à la Crosse canoes can early in Spring bring out the quantity required for the passage down to York, and from Isle ala Crosse back to Athabasca: two or three of the Saskatchewan Boats might convey the quantity required for the Journey back from York to Isle ala Crosse by the River that falls out of Play Green Lake⁴ by Crosse Lake into Split Lake which would be the other provision Depot.⁵ These remarks I beg leave to recommend to the attention of Govr. Williams and in order that the state of the Navigation may be accurately known to our Athabasca Guides, I intend sending two Canoes by the track in question next Spring if any person can be found to conduct

[fo. 12]

¹ New Norway House was built on Jack River in 1826.

² A long abandoned trail between the Beaver and Saskatchewan Rivers. It began near the point where Moose Brook enters Beaver River and ran southward, passing Moose Hill Lake, and reached the Saskatchewan River near Buckingham House.

³ A river rising near Lac la Biche and flowing into Ile-à-la-Crosse Lake after a course of about 315 miles, running first eastward and then northward.

⁴ So called because of the accumulation of a bright green water weed on some parts of it, and especially at its entrance. This lake is really an arm of Lake Winnipeg extending north-west from the latter's north-eastern end.

⁵ Split Lake House was established by the H.B.C. in 1790, and it was abandoned in 1794. It was again in existence in 1824, when Roderick McKenzie was in charge of it; its final abandonment was decided on in 1833.

August them. We have been unable to come up with Mr. Clarke this
 1820 evening, who keeps the lead in his Light Canoe, mine being overloaded, and could not find the entrance of the River on account of the darkness of the Night, therefore encamped on a small Island in this Lake at ten O'Clock P.M. The weather has been very boisterous for the last few days, cold, wet, and uncomfortable.

31st, *Rapid River*.¹—*Thursday*: Were afloat this morning at day-break, and found Mr. Clarke at the Grande Rapid, where one of his men impertinently told me that unless the gallon of Rum was paid, his Master authorised them to turn the bag of shot out of his Canoe, I therefore ordered my people to bring it on, until they overtook the Brigade, altho' the Canoe is loaded to the water's edge; proceeded 'till nine O'Clock when we breakfasted, and dried our baggage, which has been wet several days. Made Portage de Baril,² Portage de l'Isle and Rapid River Portage, at the entrance of Rapid River found some of Mr. Clarke's people belonging to the Lac Laronge Post³ waiting his arrival; he is likely to be warmly opposed there this season and altho' his first Brigade has been in nearly a month, there is not a piece of goods yet sent to the Post. This is very bad management. Stopped here the remainder of the day.

September 1820

September 1st, *Lac des Cautte*.—*Friday*: Embarked about an hour
 1820 before day break—passed Rapid River discharge, Lac de la Montagne, Portage Montagne, Petit Roche, Otter Lake, Otter Portage, Portge. de Diable, Lac Diable, and encamped here at seven P.M., with the Spoon and Coal's band of Indians⁴ consisting of twelve families; two of Mr. Clarke's

¹ Now Montreal River, a stretch of water about twelve miles long connecting Lac-la-Ronge with Churchill River.

² The numerous portages and lakes which figure in the journal for the next three or four days are well described in *Hearne and Turnor's Journals* (Champlain Society, 1934), p. 341 *et seq.*

³ The Lac-la-Ronge post was administered from Ile-à-la-Crosse. See Appendix A.

⁴ The Coal's, or Coles, band was a band of Blackfoot Indians. It has not been possible to identify the tribe of the Spoon's band.

men are along with them and they appear well disposed but September
 have most extravagant notions; it is intended to equip these 1820
 Indians without bringing them to Isle ala Crosse in order that
 they may have no communication with the No. West, but it
 was very injudicious to permit them to encamp on the track as,
 if Thompson who is a great favorite falls in with them, it is
 probable that he may debauch at least one half the band. Mr.
 Clarke gave them a large Keg and they are now in a beastly
 state; they seem to regret the Capture of Mr. Robertson,
 and Mr. Clarke takes uncommon pains to convince them that,
 that Gentleman is a very secondary personage to himself.—

2nd, *Lac de L'Isle D'Ours*.—*Saturday*: Started at four [fo. 13]
 A.M.—Made Descharge des Ecors, Petit Roche, La Trout
 & Portage la Trout, where we found the Brigade. The
 Canoes are in a very leaky state, and no gum to repair them ;
 I requested Mr. Clarke to furnish the Brigade with that article
 as they passed Isle ala Crosse, which with great reluctance he
 agreed to do, provided Lamallice (who is rather an independent
 fellow) chooses to humble himself and ask it as a particular
 favor, I however told him it was the duty of the Gentleman in
 charge of Isle ala Crosse to provide such articles for the use of
 the Brigade, and that the Company's business must not be
 neglected, even if the Guides manners were not so courteous as
 he could wish. Gave the people a dram and proceeded, made
 Portage de Aurice and encamped on an Island in the middle
 of this Lake at eight P.M. Blowing hard and very cold. Mr.
 Clarke ahead.

3rd, *Lac des Souris*.—*Sunday*: Embarked at day break, got
 through the Lake, made Portages Canot Tournier, Bouleau,
 and arrived at Portges. des Epingles at ten A.M., where we
 found Messrs. Oxley & Andries, also the N.W. Brigade de-
 tained by a strong adverse wind, our Brigade came up at two
 P.M. Gobin¹ one of the Bowsmen was nearly killed on the last
 Portage by falling under the Canoe. Being anxious that
 Messrs. Oxley & Andries should accompany us, gave them a
 man out of my Canoe; Mr. Clarke agreed to do the same, and

¹ Jean Baptiste Gobin, a Canadian employed as a bowsman by the H.B.C. in
 1820-21, when he was stationed at Ile-à-la-Crosse.

September take a keg of Rum from them in order to lighten their canoe,
 1820 but he afterwards changed his mind, kept the man, and returned the Keg, after filling his liquor case out of it; these Gentlemen must therefore follow. Mr. Robertson was nearly drowned in the Rapid of this Portage when taken out a prisoner by the N.W. last year; it is a dangerous rapid, and I suspect his persecutors intended that it should have been his grave; two of the Crew were lost and his escape was miraculous. The weather moderated at four P.M. when we embarked, passed through Lac des Epingles, and at eight encamped at the Entry of this Lake.

4th, Knee Lake.—Monday: Embarked at half past two A.M. Got through Lac des Souris, Lac du Serpent, Mounted Serpent Rapids, the navigation very bad and obliged to walk up through strong brush and marshes about three miles; Gummed & breakfasted at the entrance of Lac de Sable, passed through that and Lac Croche, ascended Rivierre Croche and little Grassy River, and encamped at the entrance of this Lake at eight P.M.

5th, River.—Tuesday: Made an early start, passed through Knee Lake, Made Knee Lake Portage, Decharge de Rapid Croche and found a band of Isle ala Crosse Indians in Lac Croche, in charge of one Pellant¹ a N.W. Servant: this man was a contracted Servant of the Honble. Hudsons Bay Coy. and came up with Mr. Robertson two years ago, the length of Point Meuron, where he became indisposed, and altho' a valuable man and had got a considerable advance of Wages, [fo. 14] Mr. Forrest gave up his contract in consideration of working one of his Canoes back to Montreal, whereas he should have been forwarded to the interior by the Brigade coming in; this is one of the disgraceful advantages which Mr. Forest takes of the confidence reposed in him by the Company. Three of Mr. Clarkes Indians were in this band, they complain bitterly that they have no Company's servant to protect them, Mr. Clarke therefore left one of his people with them; proceeded and met a half sized canoe from Isle ala Crosse with supplies for the

¹ Pellant joined the service of the N.W.C. in 1819.

Indians: the delay and neglect that has taken place in forwarding these supplies arises from the dilatory measures of Mr. Spence, who was left in charge of the District for the summer. Got through Lac Croche & Lac Primeau made Portge. la Puisse and encamped at six O'Clock. Raining in Torrents. September 1820

6th, Isle ala Crosse.—Wednesday: Embarked before day break, ascended a bad Rapid and broke our canoe at six A.M., which detained us about an hour. Made decharge de grande Chaguina, Portage Sonnant, Blowing hard with heavy rain. Mounted Chaguina Rapids, passed through the Lake of that name, sailed through Isle ala Crosse Lake with a fair wind and got to Fort Superior at twelve O'Clock P.M., where we found Messrs. Spence, McLeod, McKenzie & Manson.

7th, Thursday: This is a pleasant situation, an excellent Fort, and capable of being made a tolerable farm as the soil is good; the Lake abounds with whitefish¹ throughout the year:—the N.W. have also a fine establishment;² Messrs. Larocque & Heron are at present in charge:—It is supposed there will be a strong opposition here this year, both parties are very formidable, but I think Mr. Clarke must keep the upper hand, as he has double the quantity of goods that his Opponents have:—Mr. Thompson is expected to have charge of the District and Livingston the Sheriffs Officer is also coming in for the purpose of taking Messrs. Clarke McLeod & McKenzie for the affair of the Grand Rapid.³ The business of this District seems to have been conducted with little ability during the summer, but it could not be otherways, when a poor superannuated Man like Spence has the charge who can have no other claims to

¹ The *Coregonus Albus*, genus *Salmo* Linn.: it is also known as the tittameg, from its Cree name, attihhawmegh. The weight of an ordinary whitefish is about 3 lbs., but they sometimes reach 8 lbs. or more. Whitefish were the usual mainstay of the 'Fish Posts' in the interior.

² The N.W.C. post was already established at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1790, and a new N.W.C. post at the southern end of the lake, three-quarters of a mile north-east of the old settlement, was there by 1798. After the amalgamation between the two companies, the H.B.C. post was the one which was kept.

³ Cf. Introduction, pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

September such an important trust than the circumstance of his being
1820 the *Father of Mr Clarke's Mistress*. Made the following arrangements with Mr. Clarke, vizt.:

1st. That on my arrival at Fort Wedderburne, I should dispatch a canoe to Isle ala Crosse for 3 rolls Tobacco, 3 Kegs Spirits, 1 Keg & 11 lb. Powder, 8 or 10 bags Pemican, a Seine Net & Mr. O'Doherty & Cochrane passengers. The Canoe not to be detained more than one day at Isle ala Crosse in order that it may get back by open water.—

2nd. That Mr. Clarke should send for the Packet¹ to Cumberland and an Express sent from Athabasca to Isle ala Crosse for it early in December.

3rd. That Mr. Clarke will provide Horses & Carts for Portage Laloche, and two men from Athabasca with two from Isle ala Crosse to repair the road during the summer under the superintendence of the Officer in charge at Lac Laloche.²

4th. That Mr. Clarke provides Ninety bags Pemican for the use of the Athabasca Department in Spring, vizt.:

12 bags from Athabasca to Portage Laloche for the Brigade.

20 Do. from Portage Laloche to Isle ala Crosse for Do.

28 Do. from Isle ala Crosse to Cumberland for Do.

15 Do. for McKenzie's River.

15 Do. for New Caladonia.

90 bags Pemican agreed to be furnished by Mr. Clarke for the
— Athabasca Department.

[fo. 15] 5th. That Mr. Clarke provides six new Canoes for Athabasca Department in Spring.

6th. That a Canoe is to be sent from Athabasca to Isle ala Crosse early in Spring (Cayenne Grogne Guide)³ for a cargo of goods which Mr. Clarke undertakes to provide for McKenzie's River, Grogne to proceed with this Cargo from Athabasca

¹ The winter mail from Governor Williams.

² Joseph Perring (see Appendix B) was in charge at Lac la Loche since the autumn of 1819.

³ Pierre Lerroux, surnamed Kay-Yah or Cayenne, a Canadian half-breed brought up by the Indians and serving as an interpreter. See Appendix B.

Lake accompanied by Mr. Andries, and after his arrival at September Bears Lake,¹ return with one man to Fort Wedderburne, in 1820 order to Guide the two Canoes expected from Norway house back to Bears Lake.

8th, Friday: Detained here by a strong head wind and heavy rain. Wrote the following Letter:

ISLE ALA CROSSE, 8th September, 1820.

To WM. WILLIAMS, ESQRE.,
Governor in Chief of Ruperts Land.

SIR,

I had the honor of addressing you from Cumberland on the 24th Ultimo, from whence we took our departure on the 26th and arrived here in safety on the night of the 6th Inst. The Brigade is making an excellent march, and will be here in the course of tomorrow if the weather permits:—Mr. Finlayson left this place on the 1st, and as he must have been detained by contrary wind at Buffaloe Lake² for two or three days, we shall no doubt overtake him at Fort Wedderburne; the New Caladonia business is of course abandoned for this year, but I trust no obstacle will prevent both it and McKenzie's River being established next season. The N.W. are very quiet here as yet; Mr. Clarke must keep a watchful eye upon them, otherways they will give him free quarters for the winter. The Canoe which you ordered from here last spring for the New Caladonia Pemican only arrived yesterday with four bags instead of Twenty: Mr. Heron I fear is to blame for this disappointment:—By it we have received information that the N.W. Columbia Canoes were attacked by a party of Green Lake Indians³ in Beaver River, headed by a son of Mr. Wm.

¹ The lake lying under the constellation of the Great She-Bear; it is irregularly shaped, about 170 miles long and 90 miles wide at its widest. It lies about 230 ft. above sea-level, south-east of Coronation Gulf. It discharges by Great Bear River into Mackenzie River.

² Peter Pond Lake, formerly known as Buffalo Lake, about thirty-five miles long and ten miles wide at its widest point. This lake joins on the eastern side of its southern end with the southern end of Churchill Lake.

³ Crees.

September 1820 McGillivrays,¹ and that they have murdered several of the people; Four dead bodies were found and it is yet uncertain how many have fallen; Stuart is supposed to have escaped: the cause of this horrid transaction is unknown, but it is understood that young McGillivray has long threatened revenge for some private injury; he was one of those that were invited to the Grand Rapid this season, but declined taking up arms against the English. We have no accounts from Athabasca; I shall have occasion to send a Canoe back this length immediately on my arrival, for some pieces brought in Mr. Clarkes boats, and will by that conveyance have the pleasure of addressing you. We proceed on our Journey in the course of an hour hence. I have the Honor to be, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.,

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

9th, *Lac du Bœuf*.—*Saturday*: Took our departure from Isle ala Crosse at five A.M., blowing fresh, passed through Rivierre Cruise and got to the entrance of Lac Clear² at two O'Clock where we were detained by the wind. Along the N.E. side of Lac Clear I understand there is a communication to Athabasca, which avoids Portage Laloche, it was explored by the X.Y.³ Compy. but found very circuitous. Re-embarked at five P.M. and encamped at the entrance of this Lake at eight O'Clock.

¹ On 8th October, 1820, John Clarke wrote to Governor Williams that 'Stewart (John Stuart) and his three canoes proceeded up Beaver River on 25th August and by return of our people from the Moose Lake Portage we are informed that a skirmish took place above Green Lake between them and some Indians, among whom was a son of William McGillivray, which ended in the death of two of the North Westers and naturally shattered the canoes'. The son of William McGillivray here mentioned may possibly have been Joseph McGillivray (see Appendix B).

² Rivierre Cruise, or Deep River, is about fifteen miles long, and connects Ile-à-la-Crosse Lake with Churchill Lake, here called Lac Clear. Churchill Lake is about twenty miles long and ten miles wide at its widest, and connects Frobisher Lake, on the north, and Peter Pond Lake, on the south.

³ Known also as the New North West Co. It was founded in 1798 by the amalgamation of some firms which opposed the N.W.C. In 1803 the XY Co. was reorganised and called itself Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Co.; in 1804 it amalgamated with the N.W.C. Cf. Introduction, p. xvi.

*10th, Rivierre La Loche.*¹—*Sunday*: Unable to leave our September encampment on account of the wind until ten A.M. This is a 1820 very stormy Lake being much exposed by it's high situation, and Canoes are frequently wind bound several days. Made the Grande Traverse² altho' blo[wing] fresh with a short broken sea, which rendered it somewhat dangerous. Encamped at the entrance of this River at nine P.M.

*11th, Portage de Pinnet.*³—*Monday*: Did not embark on account of the Rapids until five A.M., the water very low and much time occupied in polling up, and repairing the damage which our Canoe had sustained.—The Water was so low in this River some years ago that the N.W. Brigade could not proceed, they were therefore under the necessity of bringing their Athabasca Indians to this place in order to be equiped, and part of their goods was hauled by Dogs in the course of the Winter, a very expensive and laborious business: here I fear our boats⁴ will meet with difficulty in dry seasons, but as they are intended to come in early while the Waters are high, there will be less danger. Made Decharge la Barrier, Decharge Sepulcre,⁵ the latter is the worst piece of road I ever travelled, it is three miles in length, and the last mile a perfect swamp, filled with stumps of Trees three feet deep: the poor fellows carry two pieces each the whole length of this Discharge. Encamped at seven O'Clock. [fo. 16]

12th, Rivierre La Loche.—*Tuesday*: Renewed our march before day break. Met an Indian under the charge of a N.W. man, gave them a dram and told the Indian we should be glad to see him in Athabasca, but his keeper seemed to have him under strict discipline; arrived at the entrance of Lac La Loche at nine A.M.; blowing hard and compelled to put up for the day.

13th, Portage La Loche.—*Wednesday*: Left our encampment at five A.M., strong wind and shipping much water; got to Mr. Clarkes establishment in the Lake⁶ at 10 A.M.; one

¹ Or Methy River; it connects Methy Lake with Peter Pond Lake.

² 'Grande Traverse' here means crossing a lake instead of skirting its shores.

³ On Methy River, close to the southern end of Methy Lake.

⁴ Cf. n. 1, p. 12.

⁵ Both on Methy River.

⁶ Lac la Loche post (see Appendix A).

September Perring in charge, where I found a very fine band of Indians,
 1820 to whom I made a speech and gave some Rum & Tobacco; from them I learnt that the N.W. had circulated a thousand falsehoods to our prejudice, but they appeared delighted to find that they were void of foundation. Mr. Clarke's fame resounds over the country and has attracted Indians from all quarters; from him they expect unlimited supplies, without recompense, and calculate on passing an easy comfortable winter without the trouble of hunting: The greater part of this band has migrated from Athabasca, numbers are expected to follow, and I suspect there will be very few left: this establishment interferes very much with Fort Wedderburne, and is not likely to do good to the Trade generally, and therefore in my opinion should be with-drawn. Perring the man in charge is totally unworthy the trust reposed in him, and should be dismissed the service; he is on terms of intimacy with Frazer¹ the N.W. Clerk in charge of the opposite post, who he has supplied with fish the greater part of the season; he is also an habitual drunkard, and enjoys himself with his friend Mr. Frazer at the Company's expense on the liquor intrusted to his charge; Mr. Frazer finds him a very convenient social neighbour, and as he has not the means of reciprocating, he spends his Evenings very pleasantly over a flagon in Mr. Perrings Tent. I have given this fellow a very serious lecture on the impropriety of his conduct, and will write Mr. Clarke on the subject. He was pleased to give me a little dried meat as we were short of provisions, but not until I handed Mr. McLeod's note to that effect, as it appears he has been peremptorily instructed by Mr. Clarke *never to render any assistance to the Athabasca Department*. Took leave of this Gentleman who is certainly one of the Company's worst bargains, and proceeded to Portage Laloche. The entrance from the Lake is by a little shoal zig-zag muddy stream for about half a mile to the landing place, but sufficiently large to admit a fifty piece boat; proceeded about one mile on the Portage and

¹ Probably Paul Fraser (d. 1855), a Canadian engaged as a clerk by the N.W.C. in 1819. After the amalgamation between the two companies he entered the service of the H.B.C. as a clerk. Cf. W. S. Wallace, *Documents relating to the N.W.C.* (Champlain Society, 1934), p. 444.

encamped near the little Rivulet: it is usual for the *Bourgeois*¹ on his first visit to this Portage to treat the men with an extra dram, otherways he is subject to the unpleasant process of shaving (as practised on board Ship in crossing the line), and as ancient voyaging customs must be respected, I indulged the people with a bottle of rum, and they have honored me by naming the spot 'Le campement de Monsr. Simpson'; the early part of the evening was extremely calm and mild, but about nine O'Clock a sudden gust of wind came on (which blew the Tent down and the ridge pole nearly fractured my skull) and was followed during the Night by a violent Tempest with Rain. [fo. 17]

14th, Thursday: This has been a day of great labour to the men, the Canoe & cargo have been carried to the Petit Lac in the Portage, the Canoe fell from the shoulders of the men and is greatly damaged. The air keen with severe Frost.

15th, Portage de Pin.²—Friday: Resumed our labour at day-break and got the Canoe and baggage across the Portage to the Little Athabasca River at ten A.M. Portage La Loche is the height of land that divides the waters which discharge themselves into Hudson's Bay from those that run into the Frozen Ocean, and is considered the N.W. boundary of the Honble. Hudsons Bay Coys. Territories;³ The Portage is thirteen miles long, say: nine to the Petit Lac, and four to the Little Athabasca River: the road for the first nine miles is very good, and carts may with perfect safety travel it without any repair, the bottom hard sand, and notwithstanding the late heavy rains

¹ A French-Canadian term used generally to denominate a proprietor or partner in charge of a N.W.C. fort or district.

² On the Clearwater River (here called Little Athabaska River), west of White Mud Portage. The Clearwater, or Little Athabaska, River originates in Swan Lake and flows into the Athabaska River after a westward course of about 140 miles.

³ The H.B.C. Charter of 1670 gave to the Company all the lands watered by rivers which flow into the sea at Hudson's Bay. Portage la Loche (Methy Portage) was therefore the boundary of the territories in which they had monopoly rights; elsewhere they had the same rights to trade and settle as any other British subject. For a description of this (and other portages) see *Hearne and Turnor's Journals* (Champlain Society, 1934).

September perfectly dry:—Petit Lac is about a quarter of a mile wide
 1820 across,¹ which the Cargo is carried in the Canoe; from thence
 the road is bad for three miles, and carts cannot be used until
 considerable expense is incurred in making and repairing it;
 in the last mile is a precipice where there will be great difficulty
 and labour in launching the Boats, however with rollers and
 careful steady men it can be accomplished. The summit of the
 precipice commands a very charming and extensive view of the
 surrounding country, exhibiting the varieties of Hill, Dale,
 wood & water. This Height of land rises about one thousand
 feet and is in North. Latitude $56^{\circ} 20'$ & Longitude $109^{\circ} 15'$
 West. Loaded Boats even with the assistance of carts will I
 think take a week in the Portage, where there is abundance of
 provender for Horses. Detained until one P.M. repairing the
 Canoe; the Voyage now becomes more agreeable and less toil-
 some, as we run down the stream, the banks pleasant, and have
 the prospect of getting to our destination in the course of a few
 days. Made the Terre Blanche Portage² which is the only
 carrying place for boats of any great consequence except
 Portage Laloche between the Saskatchewan River and Rocky
 Mountains. Encamped at eight P.M.

16th, *Little Athabasca River*.—*Saturday*: Embarked at day
 break. Made Decharge la grosse Rochè, Portage la Bon, &
 Cascades.—Breakfasted at the mineral springs, the waters of
 which from the taste and smell, appear to be strongly impreg-
 nated with Sulphur; Came up with two Crees in charge of a
 N.W. man, gave them a dram, but they did not seem inclined
 to change sides; broke our Canoe and lost two hours in repair-
 ing the damage; encamped at seven P.M.; light supper as our
 provisions are nearly exhausted.

17th, *Athabasca or Elk River*.³—*Sunday*: Started at the usual

¹ Although the copy of Simpson's Journal preserved in the archives of the H.B.C. is a fair copy, such misplaced punctuation as this sometimes occurs.

² Or White Mud Portage.

³ A river originating from the glaciers of Mount Brown in the Rocky Moun-
 tains, and from a lower height called the 'Miette' which is close to the Yellow-
 head Pass. The river crosses the province of Alberta and the Athabaska district,
 and falls into Lake Athabaska after a course of nearly a thousand miles.

time; the Water low and much injury done to our canoe, passed the Forks of this River,¹ also the Salt & Pitch Springs,² but did not go ashore to examine them, as time is now precious our provisions being quite out. Encamped at seven P.M. Empty stomachs do not agree with the Canadians, they have lost much of their gaiety to day. [fo. 18]

18th, *Monday*: Embarked before day break, met a N.W. Canoe with one passenger; passed our deserted Post of Berens House (Pierre aux Calumit) and encamped at seven O'Clock supperless.

19th, *Rivierre de Embarras*.—*Tuesday*: Left our encampment at day break, and at the entrance of this River came up with Big Bubbies band of Indians in charge of one of our people: they were delighted to see us, and complained bitterly of the miserable state in which they were left during the summer, without Ammunition, Tobacco or Goods; the N.W. had used every means to debauch them, represented us as birds of passage, and that they would never permit us to cross Portage La Loche again; that they had taken the Governor, Mr. Robertson,³ and all the Company's principal Officers prisoners, and 'made Slaves of them for Life.' Soucisse who was sent out in spring a prisoner under a legal warrant and escaped at the Grand Rapid corroborated these statements, but all their arguments had no effect on Big Bubbies who remained staunch, and Soucisse when all other expedients failed beat and maltreated them in a most inhuman manner; he broke the arm of one 'Eazzino or the Cariboo⁴ by a blow of his paddle. I said a few words of comfort to these poor creatures, gave them a dram, and desired them to join us at Fort Wedderburne in the course of a few days; they in return gave us a very seasonable supply of geese and ducks which cheered the drooping spirits

¹ The junction between the Clearwater and the Athabaska Rivers; about 152 miles south of Lake Athabaska.

² Cf. p. 3, n. 4.

³ They had actually taken Colin Robertson, but not Governor Williams, at the Grand Rapid in June 1820.

⁴ An Indian equipped and trading with the H.B.C. at Fort Wedderburn in 1820, according to the list of Indians equipped there.

September of our men, who were by this time nearly worn out; proceeded
 1820 a little way, and landed to a very hearty repast, eleven of us
 devouring at one meal no less than twenty two geese and three
 ducks; proceeded and met one of our Canoes with Messrs.
 McAulay & Grignon, going with a supply of Ammunition
 to the Indians, and in quest of the Berens house Crees; from
 them we had the pleasure to learn that every thing is quiet and
 well at Fort Wedderburne. Saw two of our people shooting
 geese which are very numerous in this River, they have made a
 good hunt. Landed at six P.M. in order to give our men time
 to wash their things as they are desirous to appear in good
 feather on their arrival at the Fort.

20th, Fort Wedderburne.—*Wednesday*: Made an early start,
 changed our Voyaging dress at the entrance of the Lake; had
 much difficulty in crossing the Traverse as it blew hard and
 narrowly escaped being lost. Arrived here at twelve A.M.,
 where I found Messrs. Brown, Finlayson, Roy, McBean &
 Laronde, who welcomed me in Athabasca with every mark of
 respect and attention. Mr. Brown has had charge of the Dis-
 trict during the summer, and seems to have been very attentive
 to the duties of his situation; the people have undergone some
 hardships from the scarcity of provisions, and I regret to ob-
 serve that there is a great want of subordination amongst them:
 Until Mr. Finlayson's arrival the store was empty, and not a
 charge of ammunition in the Fort. It was intended that Mr.
 Brown should have gone in charge of the Rocky Mountain
 expedition,¹ but on account of the lateness of the season, the
 [fo. 19] settlement of that valuable country must be postponed until
 next year; had Mr. Brown gone from hence previous to my
 arrival, I intended having given the charge of the District to
 Mr. McAulay, but as the former Gentleman remains here
 during the winter, and has conducted the business very much
 to my satisfaction, I have continued him in charge. By the last
 accounts from Peace River I regret to learn that Mr. Thomas²

¹ The expedition led by Ignace Giasson, sent across the Rocky Mountains in
 the autumn of 1820 to prepare the way for the settlement of New Caledonia.
 Cf. Appendix A.

² Charles Thomas, cf. Appendix B.

has done little good at St. Marys during the summer: the September
buildings not completed; the people in a state of Mutiny, no 1820
Bark raised for the canoes of next year, no provisions secured,
in short the business of the post sadly mis-managed. The
Natives have been very sickly, many dead, and numbers have
deserted that part of the country, so that I fear we cannot expect
large returns this season. Mr. Laronde it appears came here
from Colville House in quest of a wife¹ by verbal permission
received from Mr. Robertson in Spring; he appears to have
been very industrious during the summer, having made with
very slender means about $3\frac{1}{2}$ packs Furs, a quantity of pro-
visions and erected some good buildings. It was intended that
Mr. Thomas should have charge of Colville House during the
winter, but as he has been so very inactive at St. Mary's, and
the removal of Mr. Laronde might be prejudicial to the interest
of that post, I have continued the latter Gentleman in the
management of it. No recent accounts from Great Slave Lake.²
The No. West have as usual been most insolent, they have
repeatedly threatened to take the Fort³ and people, and fre-
quently paraded in front of our Gates exhibiting their swords
& pistols; Soucisse particularly has taken great pains to annoy
Mr. Brown who found it necessary to keep himself a close
prisoner, erect a bastion for the defence of the Fort, and have a
regular guard mounted; they are now however tolerably quiet:
Messrs. Leith, Keith & Smith⁴ are here at present, the former
is Chief of the Department and goes to Peace River. Black,

¹ It was common for fur-traders to marry Indian women or half-breeds. Such marriages were not recognised by Canadian law, and the wife was usually left behind when the husband returned to Canada or Europe, some pension being often left for her and her children. Such a 'marriage' did not prevent the man from marrying again in Canada or elsewhere without committing bigamy, but when the 'Indian marriage' had been celebrated by a clergyman re-marriage in a church was not possible. The H.B.C. on the whole tried to discourage such marriages, but Simpson held that such unions should be encouraged as 'forming a most important chain of connection with the natives'. Cf. *infra*, pp. 245, 392 and 396.

² See Appendix A.

³ Fort Wedderburn, on Lake Athabaska.

⁴ Edward Smith, see Appendix B.

September Laroque and a few other Outlaws & Felons have gone to
1820 the Mountain.¹ There are a few Indians now in the Fort, to whom I have given a regale on the occasion of my arrival, and according to custom the people had a dance in the Evening.

21st, Thursday: Early this morning the following note was put into my hand by a N.W. Halfbreed accompanied by a News-paper: 'To Gentln. in charge of Fort Wedderburne—Gentn.—As we are led to understand that you misbelieve us concerning Lord Selkirks death; you have only to peruse this Newspaper and you will find that there has been no fabrication on our part in it. W.McG., Junr.—N.B. Please to send back the paper after perusal.' To which I made the following reply: 'To the Gentn. in charge of Fort Chipewyan.—Gentn.—If the report of Lord Selkirk's death is founded on truth, we in common with all who knew his Lordships worth regret the event most sincerely; but the pains which the N.W. Coy. have taken to circulate it, confirms our belief; that the Editor of the Montreal Herald has been imposed upon designedly. R.M.,² 21st Sept., 1820.' The paper alluded to contains a paragraph headed 'error corrected' and states that his Lordship died at Pau instead of Gau in the South of France.³ I sincerely hope that the whole is an error. Had an interview with Laronde, and reprimanded him on his intimacy with the people, cautioned him against indulging them too much, and gave strict orders that no promises or presents should be made them which
[fo. 20] did not appear on their engagements; this is becoming a very general practice amongst the Officers in this part of the country, merely to gain a little popularity, but must be discontinued. Mr. Brown lodged a serious complaint against Bouche⁴ the Interpreter and several of the people for neglect of duty, and disobedience of orders during the summer; I gave them a

¹ The Rocky Mountains.

² Probably the initials of Robert Miles, who sometimes wrote letters for Simpson. Cf. Appendix B.

³ Selkirk actually died at Pau. Cf. p. 18, n. 5.

⁴ Joseph Bouche, surnamed Wakin, a Canadian half-breed engaged by the H.B.C. as an interpreter in 1816. He was stationed at Fort Wedderburn from 1818 to 1821. See Appendix B.

severe lecture, and confirmed the fines he had imposed; Bouche September
 was inclined to be impertinent on the occasion, and hinted at 1820
 joining the N.W., but when I talked of hand-cuffs & short
 allowance he lowered his tone. An example must be made of
 some of these people, otherways they will have things entirely
 their own way. Appointed Mr. McBean to the management
 of the Store, books and accounts at Colville House and dis-
 patched him and Mr. Roy for that place in Two of the Peace
 River Canoes. Made several necessary arrangements in regard
 to the establishment and trade.

22nd, Friday: Messrs. Oxley & Andries have arrived, also
 Messrs. McAulay & Grignon; the latter Gentlemen have been
 unsuccessful in falling in with the Crees belonging to Beren's
 House. Wrote the following Letter:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *22nd September, 1820.*

JOHN CLARKE, ESQRE., }
 Isle ala Crosse. }

SIR,

I arrived here on the 20th, and had much pleasure in
 finding matters fully as well as I had reason to expect. At Lac
 La Loche I saw a noble band of your Indians who appeared
 delighted to learn that you was safe and well, as from North
 West report they were led to believe, you was [not] only a
 Slave, but condemned to an ignominious Death; they are
 anxious to see Mr. McLeod, and promised to do great things
 this winter. Of your man Perring I have heard very unfavour-
 able reports; in addition to fishing for and rendering the N.W.
 every assistance, he is the intimate and bosom Friend of their
 Clerk in charge, with whom he jollifies in a most extraordinary
 manner, the Gentlemen very frequently crack a flagon together,
 Mr. Perring's Keg is always at the service of his Friend, and
 they sweat it unmercifully: you will no doubt see the propriety
 of sending this man about his business. Mr. Brown seems to
 have been most attentive to his charge; the Fort is in tolerable
 repair; all our Indians are staunch altho' he has not had a
 charge of ammunition to give them and they make fair pro-

September 1820 mises. The enemy is perfectly quiet, Messrs. Leith, Keith and Smith are here, Black made his escape to the Columbia, and Soucisse finds his quarters so uncomfortable, that he takes his departure immediately; their Watch House is still kept up alongside our Fort, and by way of being even with them, I intend erecting a similar building close to their Stockades: they seem to have taken great pains to give publicity to the report of His Lordship's death, and I have already had a laconic correspondence with them on the subject.

Mr. Finlayson arrived here a few days ago and proceeds immediately on the arrival of the Brigade. We have accounts from Peace River up to the middle of August; Mr. Thomas I fear has not exerted himself sufficiently; he has secured no provisions, the people are in a state of mutiny, and he has procured no bark; the latter is a most unfortunate circumstance and I fear will be attended with serious consequences. Mr. Laronde is here from Colville House, he speaks favorably of the affairs of that Post. No account from Great Slave Lake. Mr. McAulay is gone to the Forks of Pembina River¹ for the purpose of establishing a post there in opposition to the N.W., he declines taking charge thereof, but Lamallice will I think make himself useful at that place. Our stock of Salt is nearly exhausted, and the Two Kegs herewith sent is nearly the last particle we have got. Mr. Finlayson examined the Tar spring, but could not collect as much as would pitch his Canoe, so that I regret we cannot send you a supply. Great advantages are expected to arise from establishing Fort de Pinnette, and Mountain Island this season, I therefore intend sending a small assortment of goods to these places, and as our stock of Powder, Spirits and shot is insufficient, I have to request the favor of your sending us:

2 instead of 1 Keg & 11 lbs. Powder.

4 „ „ 3 Kegs Spirits.

1 bag shot.

¹ The junction between the Pembina (now called Christina) and the Clearwater Rivers, about twelve miles east of the junction between the Clearwater and the Athabaska Rivers. The projected H.B.C. post at the forks was never established, and no post was kept there after the amalgamation of the two companies.

Say two Kegs & 11 lb. Powder, Four Kegs Spirits, and one bag shot, also the three rolls Tobacco, the seine,¹ and our four gallons Brandy. We have not got an oz. of steel to repair an Hatchet, it will therefore oblige me if you can send from 20 to 30 lb. Grogne² declines visiting Isle ala Crosse at present, the old Gentleman must be humoured, and therefore I do not insist on it; he goes to Great Slave Lake in the course of a few days. Have the goodness to dispatch the Canoe without loss of time, and let O'Doherty & Cochrane goad the people on as the season is getting far advanced:—We are under the necessity of provisioning them on Fish and Geese, and I have to request the favor of your giving a supply to bring them back. I regret to find that there has been a general mismanagement in the affairs of this post last year, and altho' yet a 'mangè du lardè' I have the vanity to think that the system will soon be improved; 'extravagance' seems hitherto to have been the motto, it shall now however be 'Economy,' and in that respect I hope to find a spirit of emulation between Athabasca & Isle alà Crosse. Pray let me hear from you fully, and I shall address you at great length by the December express.—I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.,

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Mr. Miles wrote also to Mr. Clarke at my request, for a Keg of Spirits & a bale containing belts and files left at Isle alà Crosse by Messrs. Andries & Oxley. I beg to remark that the Keg and eleven pounds powder is not requested from Mr. Clarke out of his supplies, but what that Gentleman begged of us to lend him in order to arrange his Indians, to prevent if possible their having intercourse with Mr. Thompson, who was daily expected, and in consequence of the Natives attachment to him, he felt much alarm for them. Mr. C[larke] omitting to send in this necessary article p. this first brigade of four Canoes, I thought it advisable to distress ourselves, rather than the Interests of the Company should be sacrificed.—The three rolls Tobacco are also the property of this Dept., and were embarked in his boats at Norway-house by our giving him

September
1820

[fo. 21]

¹ A fishing net.

² Cf. p. 32, n. 3.

September 1820 Cochran as a steersman; the remainder is p. arrangement entered into with Mr. C[larke]. on the 7th Inst. Offered Mr. McAulay charge of Berens House, but he declined it on account of his late misfortune there,¹ and the difficulty of maintaining his large family; I have therefore determined on sending Lamallice there with Greill;² the former has hitherto been very useless about this place, but this mark of confidence will I think flatter him, and call forth his exertions; his Family is not numerous, and he can live when many would starve; he is merely engaged as a Brigade Guide, but promises to raise bark and make canoes which is a matter of great importance. The chief object of establishing this Post is to oppose the N.W. who have the entire command of a valuable band of Cree Indians in this neighbourhood, and there is little doubt but we shall share the trade with them; the Chipewyans also frequently pass this place in the course of their Winter hunt, both those belonging to Athabasca and Isle ala Crosse, and if our Opponents are here alone, they will be enabled to trade our Credits.³ Wrote to Mr Greill directing him to take some pieces out of the Brigade, and with two good men proceed to the Forks of Pembina River, he to remain with the goods until joined by Lamallice, and the people to go in search of the Crees. Had a conversation with Mr. McAulay about the property delivered up to the N.W. at Pierre au Culumit last year; it appears that he and his people were on the point of starvation in consequence of the Fishery being neglected,⁴ and his Opponents debauching the Fort Hunters; he applied to Mr. Stuart for relief who gave him a few provisions on the following humiliating terms; vizt.: that the provisions should be paid for at the enormous prices stipulated in the agreement; that he should immediately withdraw the establishment & himself and people return to Fort

¹ See Appendix A. Berens House.

² Joseph Greill had established Berens House in 1819.

³ The N.W.C. would take the furs which should go to the H.B.C. to pay for the outfit with which the Indians had been supplied by the H.B.C.

⁴ The H.B.C. in their reports of this affair to the Colonial Office always maintained that the starvation was due to the deliberate enticement of the Indians from whom food would normally have been got by the N.W.C. Cf. p. 123.

Wedderburne; that the Servants of the Hudsons Bay Coy. should not trade with the Cree Indians belonging to that neighbourhood until after the 1st Septemr., 1820, and that he and his men should remain idle until the 1st of June. The property in his possession to the amount of from 3 to £400 was deposited in the hands of Mr. Stuart as a pledge that the terms of the agreement should be duly complied with; it appears however that Mr. McDonald¹ did employ some of the people in the course of the winter, and in consequence of this infringement they retain the property. This infamous transaction certainly cannot hold good in any Court of Law. Sent a Canoe and five men to Isle ala Crosse for goods, and a small canoe and two men to Mr. Greill.

September
1820

[fo. 22]

23rd, Saturday: Had an interview with Mr. McAulay, he seems disappointed at not having charge of this District, but on my explaining that he was only to have charge in the event of Mr. Browns proceeding to New Caladonia, and that next season he should be left in charge he was satisfied; I moreover told him that if he preferred taking the management of Gt. Slave Lake, it would be at his option in case Mr. McVicar went home. He then informed me that he intended leaving the service next year if his Salary was not advanced to £150, and that he had already given notice to that effect. It appears that Mr. Bird engaged him for 3 years at £100 p. annum, and in the event of his renewing his contract at the expiration of that term he should be entitled to all the priveleges of a District Master.² He is with some reluctance prevailed upon to

¹ Alexander McDonald. For the aftermath of this transaction see pp. 123-4 and 320 *et seq.*

² In 1810 a scheme was put into action (under the influence of Andrew Wedderburn, later known as Andrew Colvile) to stimulate the servants of the H.B.C. by making them partly dependent on the trade returns of their posts for their stipends. This was abandoned in 1813 because those posts which were bearing the brunt of the opposition to the N.W.C., and which were therefore the most important, naturally could not yield such profits as those in the security of the Company's own territories. The returns of all the factories were therefore thrown into one aggregate fund, from which most of the stipends of the personnel were derived. Half of the trading profits of the Company for any one year were to be paid into this fund, and the fund was to be split into a hundred shares, of

September establish Mountain Island, Gt. Slave Lake this season. He
 1820 might be a dangerous enemy if attached to the N.W., and as his services will be required here next season, I have offered him £120 p annum for 3 years; he is to give an answer in the course of the winter. Had a conference with Mr. Andries on the business of Harrisons House; this Gentleman is a good but very extravagant trader, and promises to be more æconomical in future: He is intended to establish McKenzie's River next year, but his Contract expires in Spring, and he seems doubtful about re-engaging; there is no danger of his joining the N.W. but if he retires from the service, I shall be much at a loss who to entrust with the management of that Expedition, as he is the only person in our employ who has been in that part of the country; it may therefore be necessary to increase his

which the two superintendents or Governors were to get ten each, each chief factor was to get four shares, and each second factor two shares. Junior master traders were to get one such share each. The Company continued to pay limited fixed salaries in addition to these shares in the profits of trade. As a result of this arrangement each 'Master of a trading district' was to get a fixed stipend of £50 a year and one share of the trade-profits. Although the H.B.C. contemplated altering the system so that fewer men should be furnished with the trade-figures on which the shares were worked out (lest the N.W.C. should obtain valuable information) the system remained unchanged on this basis until the amalgamation, the share of profit sometimes yielding as much as £145, sometimes as little as £19.

There was still the problem of congestion to be dealt with, and in 1816 Governor Semple was ordered to promote clerks as vacancies occurred, and 'to those who are fully qualified for the situation of District Masters you may, as their existing contracts expire, agree to make additions to their present fixed salaries according to their merits and circumstances, until they can be appointed to the charge of a district'. The Committee added in a 'Secret and Confidential letter' that 'We would not wish these salaries to be raised so as to exceed £100, and a graduation may be made according to merit'. This is the remedy which Simpson is here putting into operation, and it is clear that the share of the profits of trade (an obvious imitation of the N.W.C. system) is the chief attraction in the Privileges of a District Master. Individuals were also sometimes supplied with equipments, but the H.B.C. constantly tried to cut down this, and after the amalgamation with the N.W.C. it was expressly stipulated that although the N.W.C. had been in the habit of making clothing allowances, it was not the practice of the H.B.C. to do so, and in future no District Master was to have such an allowance. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxii.

Salary. Made a speech in great form to the Indians¹ which September
seemed to give satisfaction; much of my time is occupied in 1820
conversing with these people, they look upon me as the greatest
man ever came into the country, and seem convinced that the
'English Chiefs are more powerful & honorable than the
French.' We are much at a loss for good Interpreters, those
we have got are disaffected, and therefore little confidence must
be placed in them. Made up a small assortment of Goods for
Gt. Slave Lake & Harrisons House.

24th, Sunday: Mr. Andries took his departure for Harrisons
House, gave the following instructions, vizt.:

INSTRUCTIONS TO MR. G. P. ANDRIES.
Harrisons House.

1st. The extravagant system which has hitherto been pursued at your post must be discontinued; œconomy must be studied in every sense of the word, and from your long experience and well known talent as a Trader, I feel confident that this may be effected without the risk of losing a single Indian, as our Opponents cannot from the present state of their finances, follow up the expensive course which has proved so injurious to the Trade for some years past.

2nd. The proximity of your establishment to the Chipewyan lands has drawn many of the Indians from this place, and if they are trusted with heavy debts, it is to be apprehended, that instead of hunting animals valuable for their skins, they may devote their attention to the more easy mode of subsistence by following the Grey Deer; it will therefore be necessary that few debts are given either in dry goods or ammunition, and that you should persuade a great proportion of them to take their Credits from hence instead of Harrisons House: the 'English Chief'²

¹ This speech was delivered in the evening, and the Indians had congregated in expectation of it (H.B.C. MS. B. 39/a/16, fol. 30). During the season 1820-21 there were thirty-seven Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn, thirty-seven at Harrison's House, and twelve at Berens House.

² A famous Chipewyan, included in the list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21. In 1789 he had gone with Alexander Mackenzie to establish his post at Whale Island, and he also accompanied Samuel Hearne in his expedition to Coppermine River.

September who now accompanies you, has promised to bring his band
 1820 here immediately; have the goodness to influence as many
 as possible to join him, and let Mr. Grignon & Adams¹ conduct them here without delay: By them you will send any
 Furs that may have been collected in the course of the season,
 and whatever provisions can be spared.

3rd. The North West Comy. seem inclined to pass a quiet
 Winter; indeed they have not the means of renewing their
 violent hostile measures, you have therefore little to apprehend
 on that score, it will however be requisite to keep a watch-
 ful eye upon them; avoid unnecessary quarrels and mis-
 understandings, but on all occasions support the interests
 of the Company with firmness and determination, and pro-
 tect the lives of yourself and people, as also the Com-
 pany's property by every means *however desperate* within your
 power.²

4th. You cannot afford to give the same price for dried pro-
 visions as at this place, nor do the Indians expect it, as the
 animals are more numerous in your neighbourhood, and their
 supplies taken a greater distance.

[fo. 23] 5th. You will on no consideration Trade the Debts of any
 of our other Posts, but secure the Furs of all the Indians that
 may visit you in the course of the winter on account of the post
 from which they have received their supplies.

6th. Every exertion must be used to Trade the Debts of the
 N.W. Coy., and I trust you will keep your people continually

¹ Joseph Adams, a Canadian engaged by the H.B.C. as a middleman. He entered the Company's service in 1815 and was in the Athabaska district from 1815-21.

² In a letter written on 24th February, 1820, the Governor and Committee instructed Governor Williams not to attack, interrupt the trade of, or retaliate against, the N.W.C., but to defend the lives, persons and property of the H.B.C. by every lawful means. Simpson's statement to Williams (*supra*, p. 14) is an admirable expression of the Co.'s wishes. As a result of Lord Bathurst's intervention, the N.W.C. had also issued pacific instructions to its wintering partners. These instructions Simpson himself had brought over from England and had delivered at Fort William on 28th May, 1820 (MS. H.B.C., A, 8/1/fo. 195). It must be remembered that the partnership deed of the N.W.C. was on the point of dissolution.

on the alert, both in watching our own Indians, and in Trading with those of our Opponents. September 1820

7th. To prevent the risk of any of our Posts trading your debts,¹ give to each Indian a memorandum in writing of the amount of his debt.

8th. Be careful in your advances to such of the servants as are already in debt, and in no case let notes be given in bargains; these transactions must be settled by goods at the Depot.

9th. It is with much regret I observe that there is a great want of subordination in general amongst the people; this evil must be remedied with caution; they should be treated with kindness and attention, but kept always at a proper and respectable distance, and on no account allowed to remain idle about the House: disobedience of orders, neglect of duty, dishonesty, or impertinence, will be severely punished, and you will hand Mr. Brown who has charge of the District a particular report of every instance of misconduct for the purpose of deciding on the amount of fine to be imposed upon them.

10th. A sufficient quantity of fish should be taken in the fall for the maintenance of the people during the winter; they cannot expect meat except by way of treat on particular occasions, and an abundant supply should be laid aside for Voyaging on the Company's business, as serious loss and inconvenience has arisen from a neglect of this highly necessary precaution. In the event of a scarcity of provisions here, it may be necessary

¹ I.e. acquiring those furs or provisions which had been destined for another H.B.C. post, to pay a debt incurred there by the hunter. It was against the H.B.C.'s interest that goods against which a claim stood should be traded at a post other than the one at which the debt had been incurred. Still, the practice of trading other posts' debts was quite common, as each post was attempting to reach the highest possible returns in furs. On the other hand it was in the H.B.C.'s interest to trade furs and goods destined for the N.W.C. Both the H.B.C. and N.W.C. allowed Indians hunting equipments and necessary goods on credit, which would be repaid in furs and provisions. Trading with the Indians was conducted by the companies according to a 'standard of Indian trade' which fixed the corresponding value in furs of the goods provided by the companies. The 'standard of trade' fluctuated, and rose considerably during the competition of the two companies. For the 'standard of Indian trade' (1820-21) followed by the H.B.C. cf. *Diary of Nicholas Garry*, Trans. Royal Soc. of Canada, Sec. 11 (1900), pp. 199-200.

September to send some of our people to your post, you will therefore
1820 provide for their maintenance.

11th. You will keep a regular provision book according to the form given, which is to be delivered to Mr. Brown when required.

12th. You will on all occasions impress on the minds of the Indians, that the Company are rich, strong, powerful, and strictly honorable, and that our Opponents are the *reverse*; talk largely of the reinforcements we expect next year, the Cargoes of goods that are in readiness to be forwarded at the opening of the navigation, and the protection we mean to afford against any who may attempt to oppress them.

13th. Every inducement should be held out to the Indians to renew their industrious habits, and intimate that they will be rewarded in proportion to the amount of Furs they bring us; but if they neglect their hunts, they cannot expect to have their wants supplied.

14th. A quantity of thread will be sent you for the purpose of making nets for McKenzie's River.

15th. Babiche¹ to be traded for New Caladonia.

16th. Be very particular in the explanation of Indian names both in the Debt Book and in the notes you give them.²

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 24th Sept., 1820.

(signed) GEORGE SIMPSON.

Mr. McAulay has proceeded to Gt. Slave Lake on his way to Mountain Island; he is the bearer of the following Letter:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 24th Sept., 1820.

ROBT. McVICAR, ESQRE., }
Gt. Slave Lake. }

DEAR SIR,

I did hope to have had an opportunity of introducing myself personally to you on my arrival here, but supposed the

¹ Lacing cut from raw hide of any kind, cf. p. 420.

² In William Brown's Report on the Athabaska Lake District for 1820-1 (now MS. H.B.C. B/39/e/3), the lists of Indians equipped by the H.B.C. in Athabaska have the various Indian names spelt according to their pronunciation in English.

heavy and important charge with which you are invested, did not admit of your undertaking so long a Journey, yet in the course of next season I expect to have the pleasure of seeing you, when we shall be better acquainted. In consequence of Mr. Robertson's unexpected visit to Canada,¹ the Govr. in Chief has thought proper to appoint me to the charge of the Athabasca Department, he might no doubt have found many Gentlemen of experience in the country better qualified for the duties of the Office, I cannot however learn earlier, and with the assistance and advice of my Friends at Gt. Slave Lake and elsewhere, trust to get through it with some little credit altho' yet a 'Pork Eater.'

September
1820

I expect the Brigade here in the course of a few days, and your supplies will be forwarded with the utmost dispatch; I must prepare you for Œconomical arrangements as our stock of goods is very limited, you shall however have a fair proportion which I am confident you will turn to good account. Mr. McAulay visits you on his way to Mountain Island, which he is to establish this season, I beg to recommend him strongly to your friendly attention, and have to request that you will render him every assistance in your power in his arrangements. By the Canoes I will have the pleasure of addressing you fully and officially ² meantime, I remain,—Dear Sir—Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

P.S.—I beg to inclose you a Letter from Mr. Williams.

Fined Laserte³ one of our people 500 livres for insolence to Mr. Brown, disobedience of orders and neglect of duty during the summer.

¹ By this time Robertson was on his way to England, ready to give evidence about the behaviour of the N.W.C. But Simpson was not to know that Robertson had left Canada.

² *Infra*, p. 57.

³ John Laserte, a Canadian employed by the H.B.C. probably as a middleman. He joined the Co.'s service in 1815. He was at St. Marys 1818-19, at Berens House 1819-20, and at Fort Wedderburn in the autumn of 1820. He returned to Berens House on 1st December, 1820 (cf. *infra*, p. 177). Middlemen and *boutes* are the crew of a canoe. The *boutes* are the bowsmen and steersmen; the middlemen are the paddlers. The *boutes* both paddle and direct the canoe.

54 SIMPSON'S ATHABASKA JOURNAL

September 25th, *Monday* : I have been occupied the greater part of to
1820 day in making some necessary arrangements with Messrs. Finlayson & Laronde in regard to the affairs of Peace River.— Mr. Miles busily employed in making up the Indents, and accounts of the different Posts; and Mr. Brown superintending the business of the Fort. The No. West Brigade is arrived.

26th, *Tuesday* : Our Brigade arrived in safety this forenoon, all the packages in good condition, a few of our Luxuries excepted; the people have been on short allowance of provisions for several days, but none of the flour broached. Wrote the following Letters, vizt.:

[fo. 24]

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 26th Sept., 1820.

MR. FRANCIS HERON, }
Edmonton House. }

DEAR SIR

I arrived here on the 20th, and had much pleasure in finding the concerns of this Post in as favorable a train as I had reason to expect; the Indians make fair promises, and I think there is a prospect of better returns than we have yet had. On arranging our goods for the different Posts, I am sorry to find that there is a great deficiency in most of our staple articles of Trade, I have therefore to request the favor of your giving Mr. Finlayson the following supply if possible, vizt.:

1 Roll Tobacco.

1 bag Ball.

1 Keg Powder.

1 „ Rum.

together with the roll of Tobacco and Keg of Powder which you had the goodness to bring from Cumberland for us; also that you will render him every assistance in your power; he is about to establish Fort de Pinnette, and as his means are very limited, he may have occasion to trouble you with some demands in the course of the Winter. I regret to learn that Mr. Thomas has got no bark raised this season at the Peace River, which is a most unfortunate circumstance, and will make us in a great measure dependent on the Saskatchewan from whence we calculate on getting Fourteen good Canoes; the Govr. in

Chief has no doubt given instructions to that effect. On September
 account of the lateness of the season, and scarcity of goods, we 1820
 are under the necessity of abandoning the plan of establishing
 New Caladonia this Fall, but this important object must not be
 delayed another year, I have therefore to request the favor of
 your sending to Isle ala Crosse by the Pemican Canoes the
 undermentioned skins and sinews, vizt.:

200 dressed & smoked Moose & Buffaloe skins, large and of
 superior quality.

50 dressed Do., not smoked.

50 painted Do., Do.

50 Parchment skins.

350 skins & 50 lbs. Sinews, and a quantity of Shaganapy lines.¹

Permit me again to entreat that you will render Mr. Finlay-
 son every assistance in your power and I remain, Dear Sir,
 Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 26th September, 1820.

MR. CHARLES THOMAS, }
 St. Marys. }

SIR

I beg leave to inform you that in consequence of Mr.
 Robertson's unexpected visit to Canada, the Govr. in Chief has
 appointed me to the charge of Athabasca Department.—This
 will be handed to you by Mr. Finlayson, to whom you will be
 pleased to deliver up the charge of the Peace River District; he
 is a stranger in your part of the country, and I trust you will
 render him every assistance by your council and advice in the
 management of the business, which from your judgement and
 experience cannot fail to be of the most essential importance to
 him. I intend visiting St. Marys in the course of the Winter ²

¹ Shaganapy or Shaganappi was the name given to thongs of raw hide used
 for ropes or cord.

² The situation in Athabasca prevented Simpson from leaving Fort Wedder-
 burn during the season 1820-21. Cf. *infra*, pp. 139, 185, 279.

56 SIMPSON'S ATHABASKA JOURNAL

September when I shall have the pleasure of introducing myself personally
1820 to your acquaintance, meantime, I remain, Sir,

Your Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, *26th September, 1820.*

MR. IGNACE GIASSON, }
St. Marys. }

SIR

I beg leave to acquaint you that the Governor in Chief has appointed me to the charge of the Athabasca Department, in consequence of Mr. Robertsons absence in Canada. It is much to be regretted that circumstances have prevented our establishing New Caladonia this season, but from the arrangements made there is no chance of this important object being another year delayed: I have therefore to request the favor of your holding yourself in readiness to proceed as early as from the information you have acquired of the Trade, Country, and it's resources may be considered necessary.—Mr. Finlayson from whom you will receive particular instructions, will render you every assistance in his power, and it will be necessary to re-engage the Iroquois and Hunters on the most advantageous terms without delay, in which I trust you will find little difficulty. From the warm interest you have always taken in the affairs of the Company, I feel confident that you will even to the sacrifice of your private views abandon your intention of visiting Canada, until you have established this valuable District, and Mr. Finlayson is instructed to renew your engagement for such term of years as you may feel inclined to remain in the service. Mr. Brown a Gentleman of considerable talent is appointed to the charge of the District, you will find him on all occasions ready to co-operate with and meet your views, and he anticipates much useful assistance from your knowledge of the Iroquois, Trade and Natives; he takes his departure from hence early in Spring with a supply of goods and the remainder will be forwarded from Norway House about the middle of June. Have the goodness to favor me with your Journal by the

Express together with your ideas as to our prospects across the Mountain, and any information you may consider useful. I expect to have the pleasure of seeing you in the course of the Winter at St. Mary's, meantime, I remain, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 26th September, 1820.¹

ROBERT McVICAR, ESQRE., }
Gt. Slave Lake. }

SIR,

Your intimate knowledge of the Trade, Natives, and general arrangements of your District renders it unnecessary for me to draw out a string of formal instructions; I shall therefore merely give you a few hints which I trust will not be found unworthy of notice.

1st. Economy must now be the order of the day, indeed our means are this season so limited, that we cannot follow up the extravagant system which has hitherto been adopted, and your influence with the Indians will I have no doubt soon reconcile them to the change.

2nd. Every encouragement should be held out to them to renew their habits of Industry; they should not be overloaded with Debt, short and frequent supplies may answer better than giving them their full equipments in the Fall, and they should be rewarded in proportion to their hunts.

3rd. When Mr. McAulay left here it was intended that we should establish Mountain Island, and he was to have had charge thereof; but on arranging the goods I find the stock so limited, that we cannot afford the supply necessary for that Post, I must therefore abandon the idea of establishing it this season.

4th. It will therefore be necessary that Mr. McAulay remains with you this winter, as he cannot return here by open Water; the co-operation of a Gentleman of his talent and ex- [fo. 25]

¹ This letter reached Fort Resolution, Great Slave Lake, on 7th October, 1820.

September perience cannot fail of being most useful; you will therefore
 1820 consult him on all important occasions: if upon comparing notes with him it is considered advisable that a small Post should be established at Stoney Island¹ or it's vicinity for the purpose of intercepting the N.W. Indians as they pass to and from their hunts, I have to request the favor of his taking charge of it.

5th. As great inconvenience has been experienced in all our establishments from a deficiency of goods for the summer Trade, I have to request that you will reserve a sufficient quantity of ammunition, rum & Tobacco for that purpose.

6th. The people to be re-engaged in the course of the winter on the most moderate terms for one, two, or three years if possible, no increase to be given, and it is expected they will be satisfied with a considerable reduction of Wages, as they know we expect one Hundred men from Canada next Season.

7th. I trust you will be able to check their insubordinate habits, discipline is much required amongst them, and every act of misconduct will in future be severely punished.

8th. A sufficient quantity of Provisions will I hope be reserved for the Canoes in Spring, we must not entirely depend on the supplies from Isle ala Crosse.

9th. Have the goodness to make up the lading of your Canoes with Salt, the Govr. in Chief directs that one Keg is to be embarked in each Canoe of the Athabasca Brigade.

10th. Any dressed skins, sinews, and Shaganapy lines that can be spared, you will send here for New Caladonia, as also whatever Babiche is not required for your own District.

11th. Strange to tell our Opponents seem at length inclined for pacific measures, we must avoid collision with them if possible, but on no consideration submit to be imposed on; I need scarcely remind you that the rights and interests of the Company, are to be maintained at the risk of life.

12th. Above all things I must beg leave to impress on you that Beaver is the sole object of our mission to these Northern regions, we must not fail in it, and it is by the number of Packs

¹ This H.B.C. post was established during winter 1819-20. Stoney Island was situated in the Great Slave Lake District. Cf. Appendix A.

INSTRUCTIONS TO ROBERT McVICAR 59

alone that the Honble. Hudsons Bay Coy. can appreciate the September
Talents of their Traders. I remain, Sir, Your most Obedt. 1820
Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 26th *Septr.*, 1820.

ROBERT McVICAR, ESQUIRE,

DEAR SIR,

I beg leave to inclose you a few official hints, which you will have the goodness to show Mr. McAulay; it will be necessary that he remains with you this Winter, and I trust you will find him a useful assistant. Let me entreat that no misunderstandings arise between you, the service has suffered much by private quarrels, and it is almost unnecessary to request that you make him as comfortable as circumstances admit. I shall be anxious to hear from you, therefore favor me with a full and particular communication, in the course of the winter: the Express to be forwarded early in January. I hope you have no intention of visiting Scotland next year, we cannot spare such a valuable partizan while the Enemy continues to annoy us. I am, Dear Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 26th *September*, 1820.

AULAY MCAULAY, ESQRE., }
Great Slave Lake. }

DR. SIR

On arranging the Goods for the different Posts, I find it will not be practicable to establish Mountain Island this season, the supplies are barely sufficient for those posts already settled, we must therefore abandon that plan for the present. I now regret exceedingly that you left this place, where your services would have been of essential importance; you will however be a valuable acquisition to Great Slave Lake District, and by establishing a small Post at Stoney Island or it's vicinity for the purpose of intercepting the North West Indians as they

September 1820 pass to and from their hunting grounds much good may be done; if this is considered advisable, I have to request the favor of your taking charge of it. In the event of Mr. Mc Vicars leaving the country next year, I shall be happy if you will remain and take charge of the District, but if it is his intention to continue, I will esteem it a favour if you will relieve Mr. Brown here as he crosses the Mountain¹ in Spring. I hope you have no serious intention of retiring from the service, and it will afford me much pleasure if the terms proposed, say £120 p. annum for a term of three years and the charge of a District will meet your views. Favour me with a communication by the Express in January, and I remain, Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

27th, *Wednesday*: Busily employed in arranging the goods for the different Posts.—Big Bubbies band of Indians arrived.

28th, *Thursday*: Several Indians came in to day. We are all bustle and confusion here; the people inclined to be mutinous on account of their short allowance of provisions; I must however at present submit to their misconduct, and endeavour to coax them into good humour, as we have not one half the provisions they require to take them to their different Posts. The Indians are tormenting us for liquor and their equipments. The Goods were all made up 'higledy pigledy' at the Depot, so that we have to open every individual package for the purpose of selecting the goods, the Indians and people continually interrupt this operation, it will therefore occupy a few days more. The Goods must in future be packed up separately for the different Posts at York in the course of the Winter, as the delay necessarily attending it here (where we have little convenience) embarrasses the business of the Department most seriously.² Sent off two canoes this evening for Peace River under the charge of Brunelle.

¹ Cf. *supra*, pp. 40, 47. He eventually went to New Caledonia in 1822.

² This was an old complaint in the H.B.C., consonant with the lack of adequate labels on the packages shipped from England (MS. H.B.C. D 1/1/fol. 3). Simpson remedied the system when he was Governor. Cf. *infra*, pp. 120, 357, 400-401.

29th, Friday : Mr. Miles has been at work in the Store for September two nights past arranging the goods, he has made up the 1820 Cargoes of three more Canoes for Peace River which are dispatched under the charge of Magnion. One of the men, a [fo. 26] ringleader, absolutely refused to embark and foreseeing the dangerous consequences of permitting such flagrant misconduct to pass unnoticed, I gave Mr. Miles the hint, who enforced the order with very little ceremony by giving the fellow a shaking he is not likely to forget, and dragging him into the Canoe, where he found it necessary to do his duty without further hesitation; this man is fined 300 Livres by way of a remembrancer. Wrote the following Letters and Instructions:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 29th September, 1820.

DUNCAN FINLAYSON, ESQRE.,)
Peace River District.]

SIR,

Your ability and experience as an Indian Trader, renders it unnecessary for me to go into a detail of the arrangements required for the Peace River district; I shall however trouble you with a few general remarks and suggestions, which I trust you will find useful.

1st. We so perfectly coincide in the propriety of substituting an Economical system for that of extravagance which has hitherto been pursued, that I need not further press the subject on your attention; great caution must however be observed, and I know this work of reform cannot be in better hands.

2nd. It is with much concern I learn, that there has been a great mortality amongst the Beaver Indians¹ this year, and that we have lost many valuable hunters; you will of course use every exertion to replace them, and increase the number of our adherents if possible, the liberal and well assorted outfit which is made up for the District, will enable you to equip one half the Tribe at least.

3rd. Scarcity of provisions has hitherto been the source of

¹ An Athapaskan tribe confined to the basin of the Peace River since the second half of the eighteenth century.

September all our misfortunes in this country, let me therefore entreat that
 1820 every possible exertion will be used to lay up an abundant stock, and that sufficient will be reserved for the Canoes in Spring; you must not calculate on meeting a supply nearer than the further end of Portage Laloche.

4th. Have the goodness to establish Fort de Pinnette without delay, and let Mr. Yale have the charge thereof; Mr. Giasson is to accompany him, and you will instruct the latter Gentleman to use every exertion to secure the hunts of the free Iroquois in the neighbourhood of the Rocky Mountains from New Caladonia; we unfortunately lost twelve packs last year by having no supplies to give these people: on them we chiefly depend for provisions for the New Caladonia Expedition, Mr. Giasson will therefore endeavour by every means to secure them in our Interest.

5th. It is of the utmost importance that New Caladonia should be established next year, the delay that has already taken place in settling this rich and valuable country is deeply to be regretted; You will therefore make such arrangements that Mr. Giasson, the Guides, Interpreters and Hunters should proceed when considered necessary: that Gentleman's services cannot be dispensed with; you must therefore re-engage him on his own terms, I expect he will not require any advance of Salary. In the event of his objecting to cross the Mountain again, get all the information possible from him as to the Natives, Trade, country and it's resources, route &c.—which you will hand me by the first express, and I shall endeavour to get some other Gentleman to undertake the mission. Mr. Brown will be ready to proceed early in Spring with two Canoes, and an abundant supply of goods will be sent from Norway House early in June. As the contracts of some of the people intended for that destination expire next spring, it will be necessary to re-engage them on the most reasonable terms.

6th. You will also have the goodness to re-engage in the course of the Winter the best servants whose Contracts expire next year on moderate terms for 1, 2 or 3 years, no advance can be given on the Wages of this year, and I expect that they will be satisfied with a considerable reduction, as they are aware

that Mr. McDonald brings one hundred men from Canada next year. September
1820

7th. Be careful to lay aside a sufficient quantity of Ammunition, Rum & Tobacco for the summer Trade.

8th. Let Magnion be employed early in spring in raising Bark, this important duty I understand has been neglected last summer; I calculate on twelve to fourteen good new Canoes from Peace River; the Steersmen should be directed to bring a sufficient quantity of Gum, Wattappe,¹ and Bark for repairs, as we cannot expect to be supplied at the lower establishments.

9th. Herewith I have given you Letters to Messrs. Heron & Lewis requesting they will supply you with any necessaries you may stand in need of.

10th. Pray favor me with a full and particular communication p. Express to leave St. Marys so as to arrive here by open Water.

11th. It is my intention to visit St. Marys in the month of February, when I shall expect to find the affairs of Peace River in a flourishing state under your able management. Meantime wishing you a pleasant and prosperous Winter.

I remain, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 29th Sept., 1820.

DUNCAN FINLAYSON, ESQRE., }
Peace River District.}

DEAR SIR,

By way of supplement to my official Letter of this date, I beg to call your attention to the following observations. Jealousies and private misunderstandings amongst the Officers have hitherto been most prejudicial to the general service; you will therefore no doubt see the propriety of keeping on friendly terms with all the Gentlemen in your District, and using every exertion to reconcile any little differences that may exist between them. You will bear in mind that it is Canadians you

¹ Cf. p. 3, n. 3.

September have now to deal with, not cool phlegmatic Orkney men, if
 1820 humoured in trifles any thing may be done with them, but if
 treated with uniform harshness and severity, they will Mutiny
 to a certainty. Your Fort Hunter¹ Baptiste Bisson² is the best
 without exception in the North, his temper is capricious, you
 should therefore study to please him, as in the event of a scar-
 city of Provisions, your existence in a great measure depends
 upon him; I have made his little boy a present, which I think
 will please the Father. Have the goodness to prepare a full
 and particular report of the District by the time I reach St.
 Marys. Get some of the women to gather a Keg or two of
 Berries³ for the Governor. I should like to have a male and
 female Bear Cub if you can get them, and any other members
 of a menagerie you can fall in with. Believe me to be Dear
 Sir,—Yours truly,

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

[fo. 27]

FORT WEDDERBURN, 29th Sept., 1820.

MR. LEWIS, Lesser Slave Lake.

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to inform you that every thing goes
 on smooth here; the N.W. are quiet, Black flown across the
 Mountain, and the Indians assure me, that they will this season
 do wonders. I fear Mr. Finlayson will be very short of goods
 and ammunition, if you can assist him in the course of the
 winter with a supply, it will render us essential service, and
 oblige me particularly. The Athabasca arrangements I find
 will entirely occupy my time and attention, it will not therefore
 be in my power to visit the Saskatchewan this season, but will
 if possible get the length of Fort Waterloo. I shall be at St.

¹ Most H.B.C. forts had at least one 'Fort hunter' attached to them, whose
 duty it was to provide provisions for the fort. In addition there would be
 numbers of Indian hunters, equipped from the fort on credit, who hunted
 away from the fort, at their wintering grounds, chiefly for furs.

² Baptiste Bisson, a Canadian half-breed serving as a hunter. He deserted
 the N.W.C. and entered the H.B.C. in 1818, was at Peace River 1818-19, in
 the Athabaska District 1819-20, and again at Peace River 1820-21.

³ Probably to add to pemmican.

Marys in the early part of March, and if business calls you September there, 'tis probable I will return with you to Lesser Slave Lake. 1820
I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 29th Sept., 1820.

LIEUT. FRANKLIN, }
Northern Discovery Expn. }

SIR,

Herewith I beg to forward to your address at Fort Providence, Gt. Slave Lake, Five pieces Goods brought in the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coys Canoes from the Rock Depot, and hope they may reach their destination in safety.¹ Five pieces intended to have been forwarded by the N.W. Coy. according to your arrangement with them, were also brought from the Depot and left at the Grand Rapid with a note to the Gentleman in charge of their Brigade, requesting they might be forwarded, which has no doubt been complied with. On the part of the Hudsons Bay Coy. I beg leave to assure you, that I shall be happy to render the Expedition every assistance in my power connected with this Department;² and I trust you will command my best services on all occasions. I regret that I have not an English News Paper to send you, the last accounts I have from thence are up to the 4th March, when I took my departure from Liverpool; the most important recent occurrences are the decease of our late much beloved Monarch, and His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent in the Month of January;³ the proclamation of his Majesty King Geo. the IVth;⁴ the dissolution of parliament,⁵ and the fortunate discovery

¹ Cf. pp. 5, 17, 22. They had originally been six pieces.

² Compare with this Simpson's instructions to Robert McVicar, *infra*, p. 243.

³ King George III died on 29th January, 1820, and the Duke of Kent on 23rd January of the same year.

⁴ George IV was proclaimed King by the Privy Council on 30th January and publicly proclaimed by the Heralds on 31st January, 1820.

⁵ George III's last parliament was dissolved on 28th February, 1820.

September of a horrible plot to assassinate the whole of the Cabinet
 1820 Ministers; ¹ the Conspirators to the number of 40 were surprised on the evening of the intended massacre by Mr. Birnie at the head of the Bow Street Police, and Captn. Fitzclarence with a detachment of the Guards; they made a desperate resistance, killed one Police Officer and wounded several, but the Leader, Thistlewood and nine of his companions were secured, and about to stand their Trial when I left London.

With best wishes for the success of your arduous and important mission, I have the Honor to be, Sir,

Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 29th Sept., 1820.

MR. LOUIS DENY D'LARONDE, }
 Colville House. }

SIR,

I take this opportunity of expressing my approbation of your Summer Arrangements at Colville House, which has induced me to continue you in the charge thereof this Winter, and I trust your good management and returns will prove that the confidence reposed in you is not misplaced.

1st. Your supply of goods will exceed that of last year, but I must beg leave to impress on you, that Economy must be studied with unremitting attention; it was necessary to sacrifice property in the early stage of the business in order to attach the Indians to our cause and establish us firmly in the country; that being effected we must change the system and make up for past losses: 'tis Furs we now want, and it is by the number of packs alone that the Govr. & Committee can judge of the talents and merit of the Trader; let me therefore entreat that you will strain every nerve to stand high in their opinion.

2nd. Much loss and inconvenience has been experienced from not reserving a sufficient supply of goods for the Summer Trade, to prevent a recurrence of this evil, I beg you will lay a

¹ The Cato Street conspiracy.

sufficient stock aside for that purpose, particularly of Ammunition, Rum & Tobacco. September 1820

3rd. You will on no consideration Trade the Debts of other Posts, but receive on their account whenever an opportunity occurs to prevent the risk of our Furs falling into the hands of our Opponents.

4th. Let every exertion be used to Trade the Debts of the N.W. Coy., it is the most important service you can render.

5th. It is with much regret I observe that there is a great want of subordination amongst the people in general, this must be immediately checked but with judgement and caution; they should be treated with kindness and attention, but kept always at a proper and respectable distance, and on no account allowed to remain idle about the Fort; disobedience of orders, neglect of Duty, dishonesty or impertinence, will be severely punished, and you will hand Mr. Finlayson who has charge of the District a particular report of every instance of misconduct for the purpose of deciding on the amount of fine to be imposed.

6th. Be careful in your advances to such of the servants as are already in debt, and in no case let notes be given in bargains[,] those transactions must be settled in goods at the Depot.

7th. You will on all occasions impress on the minds of the Indians that the Company is rich, powerful and strictly honorable, and that our Opponents are the reverse, talk largely to them of the re-inforcements we expect next year, the cargoes of goods that are in readiness to be forwarded at the opening of the navigation, and the protection we mean to afford against any who may attempt to oppress them.

8th. Every inducement should be held out to the Indians to renew their industrious habits, and intimate that they will be rewarded in proportion to the amount of Furs they bring us, but if their hunts are neglected, they cannot expect to have their wants supplied.

9th. From present appearances I do not think the N.W. Coy. will attempt to renew their late outrageous and violent

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September conduct, it will however be requisite to keep a watchful Eye
 1820 upon them; avoid any collision with them if possible, but on all occasions support the interests of the Coy. with determined firmness, and protect the lives of yourself and people, as also the Company's property by every means however desperate within your power.

10th. Lay up an abundant stock of provisions for the Brigade in Spring, as it is probable that a sufficient quantity has not been provided at St. Marys, and as the Freemen charge exorbitant prices you should avoid trading with them if possible.

11th. Mr. McBean will take charge of the Journal and accounts, as also of the Store, and I beg you will consult him on all important occasions.

12th. I hope it is scarcely necessary for me to caution you against any intimacy or communication except on public business with our Opponents.

13th. Four or five Kegs of Gum to be collected for the Canoes.

[fo. 28] 14th. Renew the Engagements of the best men in the course of the winter for two or three years at a reduction of wages if possible, they know we expect one hundred men from Canada next season, and therefore will not hold out for such exorbitant terms. Wishing you a pleasant Winter, I remain, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 29th September, 1820.

MR. WM. S. McBEAN, }
 Colville House. }

DEAR SIR,

I have given Mr. Laronde a few instructions which I trust will be fulfilled as far as circumstances permit. You will have the goodness to keep a particular Journal of the transactions at the Post, and prepare a report thereof under the following heads, which you will hand me in the course of the Winter, or on my arrival at Colville House. Favor me with a particular

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT 69

communication by Mr. Finlayson's Express¹ which will pass September your place about the middle of November. I remain, Dear Sir, 1820

Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

(Heads of Reports as P the orders of the Honble. Committee.)

30th, Saturday: Messrs. Finlayson & Laronde took their departure for Peace River. The North West Peace River Brigade is detained by scarcity of provisions, a canoe arrived this afternoon from St. Mary's with a supply; their people bring a vague report that Mr. Giasson and his party have been killed by the Natives of the Rocky Mountains: if any accident has occurred to them I suspect it has arisen from the inveterate machinations of our Opponents. The Gentlemen occupied in sorting goods for Gt. Slave Lake. Wrote the following Letter, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 30th September, 1820.

MR. JOSEPH GREILL, }
Pierre au Calumet or Berens House. }

SIR

The principal object of establishing a Post at the Forks of Pembina River, is the protection of our Trade, as I understand the Chipewyans belonging to this District and Isle ala Crosse, frequently pass & repass by that track in the course of the Winter, and if we have no establishment to oppose the North West at that point, we run the risk of having our debts traded, and our Indians plundered by that association.

It is also very desirable as a Provision Post; the Crees in that Neighbourhood devote their time almost exclusively to Buffaloe and Deer hunting, and if we could attach a sufficient number of them to our Interest for that purpose it would be of essential importance. I have therefore sent you a small

¹ Merely an express canoe bearing dispatches to Simpson from Duncan Finlayson, of the Peace River District. Simpson had ordered the Express to leave St. Mary's so as to arrive at Fort Wedderburn by open water.

September assortment of Goods which you will I hope turn to the best
 1820 advantage by Trading to the Crees for Provisions or Furs, also
 by trading the N.W. Debts and furnishing our own Indians
 with any little supplies they may absolutely stand in need of.

Mr. McDougald who is a Trader of considerable ability
 will be a valuable assistant, and the six men I have selected for
 you, are particularly well qualified for the service, and with such
 able support, I fully expect that you will obtain the object of
 our wishes.

The only obstacle to the establishment of this Post is the
 great difficulty of maintenance; if you find a good Fishery
 there is no danger to be apprehended, but if not your sole
 dependence must be on your Fort Hunters; every exertion
 should therefore be used to engage as many Crees for that
 purpose as may be considered necessary, but if the N.W. have
 removed the Indians, and that there is no probability of soon
 falling in with them, I fear we must abandon the object; I am
 however satisfied that you will not do so while a glimpse of
 hope remains. There is a fishery I understand within two
 days march of the Fort, if you can find it, Raiche¹ should be
 sent there with his nets immediately.

If more provisions can be made than are absolutely required
 for the maintenance of the people, let the utmost care be taken
 thereof, as it will be much wanted for the Canoes going out in
 Spring.

I have to entreat that you will study Economy with unre-
 mitting attention, that you will keep your people continually
 on the alert, both in watching our own Trade, and getting all
 we can out of the hands of our opponents, in short that the
 number of Packs will bear ample proof that you are in every
 respect worthy of the confidence and trust reposed in you.

It has been hinted that you are rather addicted to the Bottle,
 this report I cannot believe until it is substantiated on conclu-
 sive evidence, and I trust your conduct will be so perfectly
 correct as to challenge the strictest examination; a Drunkard

¹ Antoine Raiche, a Canadian engaged by the H.B.C. as a steersman. He
 entered the Company's service in 1815, and was stationed in the Athabaska Dis-
 trict from 1818 to 1821.

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you are aware is an object of contempt even in the eyes of the September
Savage race with whom we have to deal in this country. 1820

I need scarcely caution an old Soldier ¹ against the stratagems of the Enemy, nor is it necessary to exhort you to defend and protect the interests of your Employers by every means within your power; we carry arms in these times not for show alone, but absolute service if necessary.

Have the goodness to trade from fifteen to twenty good dogs, they are much required here, and let them be sent by the first ice, or by the Canoe returning from Isle ala Crosse.

From the length of time you have been at Pierre au Calumit, you must be perfectly Master of the Trade, I shall not therefore shackle you with particular Instructions, but leave the management thereof to your own judgement.

If you find it really impracticable to establish the Post on account of the scarcity of provisions, and that there is no probability of falling in with the Crees, you will bring the property and people here direct, as we must on no consideration have a repetition of the misfortunes of last Winter.² With best wishes, I remain, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO: SIMPSON.

October 1820

October

1st, Sunday : The weather has been mild for some days past, but the frost was severe last Night and the air keen to day; the Country has lost it's verdant appearance, which denotes the early approach of Winter. Sent off two canoes and ten men for Great Slave Lake with the supplies of that District; passengers two Esquimaux Interpreters for the Northern discovery expedition. Sent a canoe and six men for a load of Salt [fo. 29]

¹ Joseph Greill had been a sergeant in the De Meurons, a regiment of Swiss and German mercenaries raised during the Napoleonic Wars. They were taken to Canada during the Anglo-American War of 1812, and were disbanded in 1816. Lord Selkirk took 140 of them for his colony in 1818. For the De Meuron Regiment, see *Army Quarterly Review*, vol. xxxiii, October 1936.

² Cf. pp. 46-47 and 320 *et seq.*

October to the Gt. Slave Lake River, and a canoe to the Big Island ¹
 1820 with six men to collect firewood and repair the fishery buildings.
 The absence of these people is a great relief, as our provisions
 are very scarce. Gave the people a dance in the evening.

2nd, Monday : Had a long interview with the Indians, they
 make fair promises. Messrs. Leith & Keith have informed
 them, that it is the intention of the N.W. Coy. to make us all
 prisoners in the course of the Winter, or at all events at the
 Grand Rapid next Spring; they represent me particularly as
 an Impostor, who they mean to chain up in their *Privy* very
 soon. One of their Indians came over to day, and complained
 that they had cheated him out of his Furs; he had received his
 Equipment from us last Fall, but was plundered by them, so
 that he could not pay his Debt, but promises to bring his hunts
 to us in future. Three N.W. Canoes laden with men and goods
 started to day for Gt. Slave Lake. Made up a small assortment
 of goods for Pierre au Culumit. Messrs. Miles & Chastellain
 preparing to Equip the Indians, who are getting very impor-
 tunate. Our Hunters brought a very seasonable supply of
 geese. One of our men Duford ² called at Fort Chipewyan for
 payment of a debt owing to him by a N.W. Servant, but he had
 no sooner entered the gates than Soucisse the Bully attacked
 and beat him unmercifully. Several of our people out in quest
 of Indians. The debauch of last night has rendered some of the
 men unfit for service to day; had we a good stock of spirits it
 would work down their extravagant wages,³ the small quantity
 sold last night amounts to £43.

¹ The Big Island was an island in Lake Athabaska, about eighteen miles north-east of Fort Wedderburn and about three miles from the north-western shore of the lake. The island is about four miles long, and is about two miles across at its widest. The salt would be got from Salt River, a small western branch of the Slave River, where it is to be found on the ground-surface. Cf. p. 3, n. 4.

² Charles Duford, a Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1815. He was at Fort Wedderburn from 1818 to 1821.

³ In May 1820, the Committee had exhorted Governor Williams to try to reduce the consumption of spirits in its territories, and to try to encourage the men to enjoy sugar instead. But Simpson, though agreeing that it was desirable to decrease spirit drinking on general principles, always maintained the point which he makes here, which is that as long as such high wages are paid in the

3rd, Tuesday: Messrs. Miles & Chastellain have com-
 menced equipping the Indians.¹ On looking over the books, I find they are loaded with debt, which they can never repay, I have therefore remitted one half,² which I think will stimulate their exertions:—hitherto it has been the practice to supply all their wants, no attempt made to curtail their demands, and afterwards to give them handsome presents. They are now contented with a reduction of one fourth their usual credits, and no presents unless their conduct merit it in Spring, they seem much pleased with the arrangement which I think will be productive of good. Our Interpreters seem inclined to have things entirely their own way; Bouche is very troublesome, and it is a difficult matter to bring him to a sense of his duty. It was intended that Mr. McDougald should go to Pierre au Calumit to day, but the canoes are in such bad repair, that his departure is postponed, Lamallice the Guide whose business it is to attend to the Canoes very reluctantly set about the repairs; this fellow has a Salary & allowance equal to £200 p. annum, and has so completely forgot his station, that we have more difficulty in keeping him in tolerable humour than any Gentleman in the service, I must however curry favour with him, as his Wife is the best Interpreter in the Fort. Our people on short allowance of provisions, the N.W. in a similar state. My speeches and Star³ have got wind in the opposite Fort, their Indians are dissatisfied, and nearly the whole of them would join us had we the means of equipping them: Keith & McGillivray vent their spleen in abuse and threats [fo. 30] against me. Our people employed in cutting boat timbers & fire wood repairing the buildings and the Fishermen occupied night & day in making & repairing nets.

interior, the company must reabsorb those wages by selling goods, of which spirits are the most in demand, to its servants. Cf. Report, p. 398, and cf. p. 137 *infra*.

¹ The average equipment given by the H.B.C. to its Indian hunters consisted of clothes, guns and steel traps.

² The Governor and Committee had written to Governor Williams on May 25th, 1820, approving his suggestion that the H.B.C.'s claims for old Indian debts should be given up.

³ I.e. his destiny. Cf. *infra*, p. 79.

October
1820

October 4th, *Wednesday*: Our Gentlemen and people employed as
 1820 yesterday. The N.W. Peace River Brigade consisting of Eight Canoes went off this morning: passengers Messrs. Leith & Campbell.¹ Mr. McDougald and four men took their departure for Pierre au Calumit where they are to join Mr. Greill with a supply of goods. Messrs. Miles & Chastelain are arranging the Indians very much to my satisfaction; their Credits on an average we reduced about one half; Lamallice's wife who has great influence with them, makes herself most useful, and he seems inclined to get into favor: The conduct of the people improves, and altho they are on short allowance, there is very little grumbling. The general routine business of the Fort is now conducted with some method, and there is still room for improvement: Mr. Brown is very zealous and active but unfortunately has little system in his arrangement.

5th, *Thursday*: A N.W. Chief (Whiskey Jack) came over this morning with the intention of joining us, but Keith detained his wife and sent two Halfbreeds after him who succeeded in persuading him to return: our Gentlemen volunteered to bring the Woman over by force; but the Indian objected to that measure and declared he would bring us his hunts if they compelled him to take credits at Fort Chipewyan. Three families of our Indians have taken their departure for their hunting grounds, and made ample promises. They mean to leave an old man, the head of one of the Families on the Bustard Island² to Perish, as he is too infirm to travel. This barbarous practice is I understand peculiar to the Chipewyans.

6th, *Friday*: The weather very cold and from two to three Inches snow on the ground this morning. Poucecoupee³ & Lezett's⁴ bands fully equipped, and highly satisfied, they have

¹ This might be either Colin or John Campbell; they were both in the employ of the N.W.C. at this time. Most probably it was Colin (cf. Appendix B), who was in charge of the N.W.C. post at Peace River at this time.

² Big Island. Cf. p. 72, n. 1.

³ An Indian chief trading with the H.B.C.; his name is included in the list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn in 1820-21. One of the districts of Peace River was named after him.

⁴ An Indian chief included in the list of Indians equipped at Wedderburn, 1820-21.

not received half the goods that were squandered on them last October year. After a two hours speech they took their departure for 1820 their hunting grounds; (the Bark Mountain)¹ when putting off from the shore, they honoured us by hoisting their colours and discharging some volleys of fire arms, which we returned: the former consists of Nine and the latter of Ten excellent hunters, who I think will do great things this Winter. Bouche, Lamallice and several of our people accompanied them for the purpose of getting a supply of geese, and preventing the N.W. from tampering with them; for some days past their Halfbreeds have had the impudence to attempt debauching them even in our own hall, by the directions of Messrs. Keith & McGillivray, I was much inclined to treat these fellows roughly, but on more mature reflection, I used conciliatory measures with them, and they all assured me that if we had the means of supplying their wants and protecting them, they would join our standard.— Three N.W. Canoes gone to Fond du Lac;² they encourage their Indians to hunt in that direction which appears singular, as there are very few valuable animals in that quarter, and it is so near their own lands, that they will in all likelihood devote their attention exclusively to the hunting of Deer with which the country abounds. Engaged four Chipewyan Fort Hunters, I was desirous to have had Crees in that capacity as they are more adroit in killing the Buffaloe & Deer, but the N.W. have got the start of us and secured every Cree in the neighbourhood. Had a visit from a N.W. Indian 'Black-flesh';³ he received a small credit from us last Fall, which he partially repaid at Lac La Loche in Furs & Provisions. His son was *murdered* by Simon McGillivray last year at Bas de la Rivierre;⁴ the old man

[fo. 31]

¹ Probably Birch Mountain, up Birch River, south-west of Lake Athabaska.

² A N.W.C. post near the eastern end of Lake Athabaska.

³ An Indian chief. He eventually sided with the H.B.C., and was included in the list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21. Cf. *infra*, pp. 296, 301.

⁴ At the mouth of the Winnipeg River. Bas de la Rivierre means the mouth of any river. The N.W.C. post at the mouth of the Winnipeg River was known as Fort Alexander and was established by Toussaint Lesieur in 1792. The H.B.C. also had a post near the mouth of the river, at Point au Foutre, which was abandoned in 1812.

October is anxious to join us, he has hitherto been a staunch adherent of
 1820 the N.W. Coy., but he can no longer hold communication with the Murderers of his Family. The crimes that characterize that lawless horde have rendered them objects of disgust even in the eyes of the barbarous race that inhabit this country.

7th, Saturday: One of our men who accompanied the Indians yesterday returned this morning to inform me that 'Whiskey-Jack' the N.W. Chief and two Indians had joined Lezett's band last night; they merely required a little ammunition and some few articles of clothing which were sent them; their other supplies are to be reserved until they bring their hunts in Spring.—Several N.W. Indians have been here to day, who assure me that they will come over to us next season; they have been comparing the quality of their clothes & prices with our Indians, and are much dissatisfied with the advantages taken of them. 'Black-Flesh' the Indian alluded to yesterday whose son was *murdered* by Simon McGillivray has had a serious misunderstanding with Mr. Keith, who told him, that if he joined us this winter, he and his family would starve the next, as the N.W. would be Masters of the Country, and all connected with the H.B. Coy. taken prisoners and sent to Montreal in Irons; the old man however said that if we were driven from hence, he could find his way to the Stone Fort at Churchill, and forthwith took his leave of Fort Chipewyan bringing his three wives and eleven children along with him. Our opponents finding that the Indians were about to desert them this year have adopted a new plan, by engaging nearly all their best Hunters in the capacity of Interpreters, and giving them a full equipment in addition to their usual Credits; this must be a losing system and would not have been adopted unless they saw it was their dernier resort. An abundant supply of Men & Goods would decide the contest next year in Athabasca; they have heard of our intention to bring boats in next season, and dread the consequences.¹ Our fishery improves and the weather very fine.

¹ Hence the care taken for portages. Cf. *supra*, p. 12, n. 1, p. 32, 137. The plan had been developing for some time; in 1819 John Clarke had written 'Four new Boats for this Department would be a great acquisition, they ought to be constructed so as to carry 55 pieces and worked by eight men'.

8th, Sunday : Mr. Miles preparing an assortment of goods for Mr. Andries; I have determined on sending that Gentleman to Harrisons House to assist in Equipping the Indians; Mr. Andries is considered a good but extravagant Trader, Mr. Miles will however initiate him in the new system, and I think Andries will profit by his sound advise. Wrote the following Letters: vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 8th Oct., 1820.

MR. R. S. MILES.

DEAR SIR,

The object of your visiting Harrisons House is if possible to curb the extravagance of Mr. Andries, I fear he is more anxious to gain popularity amongst the Indians than Furs, your advice however will I think induce him to deal out the Company's property with a more sparing hand. It is desirable that as many Indians as possible should be drawn to this establishment, as if they obtain their supplies at Harrisons-House they will (instead of Hunting animals valuable for their skins which is a laborious occupation) retire to their lands where they can live with little trouble on the Rein Deer and never think of paying their Debts. Mr. Andries is not an adept at his pen, you will therefore put his accounts into a regular train and collect materials for a particular report of the post. Pray gain all the information you can about the movements of the enemy, and what their strength, intentions and prospects are. If it is absolutely necessary to be at the expense of giving the people a dance & drink, it may be a good opportunity of re-engaging them; the best men may be taken for two or three years at their former terms, but no advances on the Wages of this year at the Depot can be given: as they know we expect one hundred men from Canada, they may be induced to submit to a reduction. I shall be anxious to see you back with as little delay as possible, at all events, not later than the 10th Proximo. I remain, Dear Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

October

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 8th Oct., 1820.

1820

MR. G. P. ANDRIES,)
 Harrisons House.]

DEAR SIR,

Herewith I send you an assortment of goods, doubtless short of what you require, but fully more than we can conveniently spare, yet I know you can make them go further than most traders and therefore I shall expect proportionate large returns. Our Indians are very moderate in their demands; we have equipped twenty five excellent hunters with about the same quantity now sent you, and they have taken their departure in high spirits and perfectly satisfied. Mr. Miles who now visits you for the purpose of assisting in Equipping the Indians will fully explain the system we have adopted, and I beg you will in a great measure be regulated by his Council and advice in all your arrangements:—He is to return by the first ice and Mr. Vignau from Colville House will join you early in Decemr. Mr. Grignon has not yet made his appearance; I hope he has got the Indians, and that he will be here in the course of a day or two; if he has not left Fond du Lac on the receipt of this, have the goodness to send by him all the dried provisions, skins & Babiche you can spare. I have already spoken & written so much on the score of Economy that I shall not trouble you further on that subject, but must remind you that you need not calculate on any more goods from this quarter until the supplies for next year arrive from the Depot. I remain,

Dear Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Black-flesh gone to his wintering ground. Four Indians came in for the purpose of receiving their Equipments. St. Picquè¹ one of the N.W. Bullies requested I would sell him a little rum and offered his wearing apparel in payment; I conceived it

¹ Julien Tavurnur dit St. Picque, a French Canadian employed by the N.W.C. as a 'bully'. He entered the service of the N.W.C. as a steersman in 1816. He was stationed at Pembina in 1819-20 and at Fort Chipewyan in 1820-21.

might be prudent to keep on good terms with this Fellow, as information might in time be extracted from him, and therefore made him a present of a quart of mixed spirits; he returned a message that altho' he was engaged as a Bully¹ to the N.W. Coy., I should never have to complain of misconduct on his part, that unfortunately he had another year to serve with his present employers, and would thereafter be proud to call the H.H. Bay Coy. his Masters.

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9th, Monday : Early this morning we discovered that two of our Indians who arrived yesterday had taken flight in the course of the night; on enquiring into the cause it appeared that one had eloped with the Wife of the other, who had gone in pursuit of the amorous fugitives; in the course of the day he came up with the lady, but her paramour had absconded and thereby in all probability saved his scalp: the Chipewyan fair ones are not celebrated for their continence, altho' the vigilance of the Husbands cannot be surpassed. Mr. Miles accompanied by Charlo² the Interpreter and five men started for Fond du Lac. Our Fort Hunters equipped and taken their departure.

10th, Tuesday : Severe Frost last night and the geese nearly all migrated to a more genial climate. Our fisheries very unproductive, and every person about the Fort who can work nets employed at that necessary duty:—there should always be a years stock of Twine on hand at this Post in order that the Nets may be prepared in the course of the summer; the existence of the Post depends on the Fisheries, and while the nets are preparing it is exposed to starvation as the Fort Hunters [fo. 33] find it difficult to maintain themselves until Xmas.

11th, Wednesday : Equiped the Indians who arrived on the 8th; previous to their departure made a speech that gave much satisfaction and they assured me that they would return in spring loaded with Furs; they conceived that my star possesses extraordinary charms, and that by consulting it I can dive into futurity. The Indian whose woman committed the ' Faux pas ' a few days ago, entreated I would inform him if she would

¹ For the N.W.C.'s policy of engaging bullies, cf. *infra*, pp. 85, 214 *et seq.*

² A Chipewyan interpreter and guide employed by the H.B.C. He went over to the N.W.C. in April 1821.

October remain faithful to him during the Winter. After the necessary
 1820 ceremony I set his mind to rest on that subject, and gave a private lecture to the Lady threatening to transform her into a dog if she repeated the sin, she appeared very penitent and promised to conduct herself in a more becoming manner in future. With the assistance of this Oracle I have wrought on their superstitious ideas as far as to persuade them that I can discover every skin that is privately sold to the N.W. Coy., and I think there is no danger of a repetition of these dealings. Two men constantly employed cutting boat timbers, and I expect to have a couple finished in Spring if we can save the necessary quantity of iron for nails, but that article is now so scarce, that our old Hatchets are already exhausted. I suspect our Trader Mr. Chastellain has purloined two silk Handfs. out of the store to day; this business must be investigated in Spring, and if the fact is brought home it shall cost him a years Salary.

12th, Thursday: Nothing worthy of remark to day; the Weather cold & every prospect of an early winter. Our people employed in mudding the Houses, preparing Nets, &c. &c.

13th, Friday: Had an interview with a North West Half-breed, Brother to Lamallice's Wife, he informed me that they have no establishment at Pierre au Calumit this season, that the Crees were employed at the Forks of Pembina River and four men left with them for protection. Their Peace River Brigade were detained until the arrival of a Canoe load of Potatoes from Dunvagon,¹ which were the only provisions they had for the voyage: this shows the great advantage to be derived from a little attention to Agriculture, which in my opinion should be encouraged wherever it is practicable. Mr. Grignon is arrived from Harrisons House accompanied by the English Chief and his band; by him I received a Letter from Mr. Andries dated 4th Inst., intimating that in consequence of the Reports circulated by the N.W. of our total annihilation,

¹ In 1820 Colin Robertson had written from Peace River that he had passed a miserable winter there from want of food, but that the N.W.C. were in as bad a plight there and that 'Should they not abandon Dunvegan this winter, they will owe their preservation entirely to their extensive gardens'.

many of our Indians had deserted us. A most destructive malady¹ such as that of last year has broke out in the Chipe-ryan lands, and carried away whole bands, and they are now dispersing in all directions, hoping that a change of residence may arrest the progress of the contagion. Mr. Andries has received messages from several Indians that they will soon join him in numbers; by Mr. Grignon he has sent a few furs and some provisions. Bouche returned from Lac de Roche² with a few Geese, he left the Indians in high spirits, and seemingly determined to shew, that they entertain a grateful sense of the favors conferred on them by us.

14th, Saturday: Simon McGillivray & McVicar³ passed [fo. 34] our gates early this morning, and made a circuit of the Fort: I suspect this Gentleman is likely to be a troublesome customer and some hints have been given me to beware of him. Being desirous to see the state of our Fishery, I this morning went to the Big Island, twenty miles distant, accompanied by Mr. Oxley and some of our people; found about Five hundred White Fish in store, the Houses in good repair and the prospect of an abundant fishery. Killed a few White Partridges & stopped there for the night.

15th, Sunday: A N.W. Canoe with McVicar and an Iroquois followed me to the Big Island this morning for the purpose of watching my motions. Intended visiting the Old Fort Fishery⁴ to day (10 miles distant from the Big Island) but prevented by the wind. Returned home in the evening and found that Lamallice had got back last night and left Lezett's Band in high spirits: While absent he fell in with eight Cree N.W. Fort Hunters, and if he had a few goods they would have joined him; I proposed that he should return to them with a

¹ A smallpox epidemic.

² The site of this lake has not been identified but it was presumably in the same direction as Bark Mountain (p. 75). The expedition took six days, out and back.

³ Walter McVicar; cf. Appendix B. He was a brother of Robert McVicar of Great Slave Lake, cf. *infra*, pp. 199-202.

⁴ The original Fort Chipewyan, built by Roderick Mackenzie in 1788. Cf. Appendix A.

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October supply, but he seemed to think that it would be dangerous to
1820 move from the Fort at present, as the Lake is about setting fast; he brought eighty geese with him which is a very seasonable re-inforcement to our provision store.

16th, *Monday*: Severe frost during the night and great quantities of drift ice on the Lake. Had a conference with the English Chief and his band, they are much pleased by the attentions paid them, and complain that hitherto they were treated with indifference by the principal Officers which gave mortal offence; they, like the others make large professions: Mr. Chastellain has equip'd them with great œconomy, and they are in excellent spirits. Bouche the Interpreter objected to accompany the Indians to the Big Island and bring back a load of Fish; a severe reprimand however convinced him of his error: this fellow with his associates Lamallice & Grignon formed a league against Mr. McDonald last year, and carried their intrigues such lengths as to keep him in corporeal fear the whole Winter; they now find the system is altered, and I think will not attempt a repetition of such flagrant misconduct. Mr. Brown is a most attentive zealous Servant but unfortunately harsh and uncourteous in his address: he grants his favors with a bad grace, and his manner is by no means prepossessing, so that I have much difficulty in maintaining Peace and quietness between him and some of the Officers and Men.—Received the following Letter from him.—

FORT WEDDERBURN, 16th Oct., 1820.

GEO. SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

In consequence of the message Bouche sent to me to night signifying 'that he would not go off Tomorrow as it was intended he should do', I feel myself under the necessity of requesting, that you will draw up a set of regular instructions pointing out the duty of the different Officers and Men at the place. As I have no wish to order any Officer or man to perform any service that is inconsistent with his situation; neither will I allow any of those under me to disobey my orders with

impunity; if it is considered that the putting of those people to their duty will be attended with any consequences detrimental to the Company's service, I will give up the point, and only solicit your permission to resign the charge of the District, and will with pleasure act in any other capacity you may please to dictate. In the hopes that you will excuse this as arising solely from a wish to promote the interest of the concern, I remain, Sir,

With the greatest respect, Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.
(signed) WM. BROWN.

To which I made the following reply, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 16th Oct., 1820.

WM. BROWN, ESQRE.

DR. SIR,

With reference to the verbal communication I had with you this morning on the subject of your Note, I beg leave to point out what I conceive to be the duties of those Officers who from the injudicious phraseology of their engagements consider themselves exempt from certain offices. Lamallice is specifically engaged in the capacity of a Brigade Guide, and exempt from every other duty; it is not therefore in our power to compel him to do the duty which usually attaches to men in his situation, vizt. raising Bark, building Canoes, cutting Sleigh Timber, and making Sleighs and Snow-shoes, I am however of opinion that if he is requested politely to perform those services, he will cheerfully comply. He possesses great influence over the Canadians, and his Wife (who is the best Interpreter about the Fort) is much respected by the Indians, it would therefore be highly impolitic to have any misunderstanding with him, and as flattery is a very cheap commodity, and greatly estimated by such people, I would recommend your bestowing a sufficient quantum on them, and rendering a few trifling indulgencies in order to ensure their good offices and attach them to the Interests of the Company. With regard to Grignon he is engaged as a Clerk altho' he can neither read or write; both he

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[fo. 35]

October and those who employed him are no doubt highly culpable in
 1820 placing him in a situation for which he is in no way qualified,
 we must not however allow him to remain idle about the Fort;
 he has not I believe absolutely refused to work in canoes altho'
 from the tenor of his engagement I consider him exempt from
 that Duty, and if *asked* instead of being *ordered* I have reason to
 believe that he will either work in a canoe on short voyages,
 draw fish, make snow shoes, or do any other duty about the
 place, the menial offices excepted: If he does not he must take
 up his abode at the Fishery, as we cannot maintain drones here
 in the present state of our provisions. Bouche is engaged as a
 'Runner and Interpreter' and in every respect qualified for
 his situation, but conceives himself, and I suspect is from the
 terms of his contract exempt from voyaging except after
 Indians; at this season of the year he is not required in that
 capacity, we cannot however afford to allow him loiter his time
 away, and if he absolutely refuses to do the duties which I have
 assigned to Grignon he must be sent to attend a band of Indians,
 or to live at the Fishery, he will not however I am persuaded
 object to the offices in question if asked in civil and polite
 terms. The other Gentlemen appear so deeply interested in
 the welfare of the general cause, that if it is possible for them
 to anticipate your wishes, they will not give you the trouble of
 pointing out their several duties, and I take this opportunity of
 expressing my unqualified approbation of their conduct.
 With regard to the people your orders must be implicitly
 obeyed, and every instance of disobedience of orders, impertin-
 ence, neglect of duty and dishonesty should be visited with an
 exemplary punishment. Permit me now to remark that the
 zeal you have uniformly manifested in the service merits the
 highest encomiums and it is extremely satisfactory to me that
 the charge of Fort Wedderburne District is in such competent
 hands.

I remain, Dear Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

I am most anxious to keep on good terms with Lamallice on
 account of his Wife's influence amongst the Indians, and his

own over the men, so that he can be either a very useful or dangerous man about the Fort; he and Mr. Brown unfortunately are at variance, but my presence and the little attentions I have paid his family will I think keep him faithful to the Companys Inte[re]sts. October 1820

17th, Tuesday: The Canoe that was sent for salt on the 1st inst., returned this morning just as Mr. Grignon was preparing to go in search of the people, to whom we feared some accident had occurred from the length of time they had been absent, and our conjecture was tolerably correct as they were nearly lost in one of the Rapids, overturned and broke their canoe, lost their paddles, Hatchets, Blankets, &c.; the water moreover was so low that they could not take the canoe to the springs, and had to carry the salt on their backs upwards of Ten miles; they killed two Buffaloes near the springs, otherways they must have famished, as they started from hence with barely ten days provisions. S. McGillivray, Soucisse, three Clerks, and a retinue of Bullies, Halfbreeds, and blackguards of all descriptions have taken up their abode at Black's old quarters, the Watch House close to our Stockades. Sent Bouche and two men with the English Chief's band to the old Fort, the Chief starts in a few days.

18th, Wednesday: Sent Grignon and four men to procure sleigh and snow shoe Timber. Mr. Oxley had an interview with 'Kelly'¹ an Irishman (servant to Simon McGillivray) this man and one 'O'Hara'² were engaged specifically for the Grand Rapid affair, where they were prevailed on to come in to Athabasca, and in consideration of their being soldiers³ and ready to turn out under arms when called upon, the former has a Salary of £50 and the latter of £70 p annum: from this man's remarks it would appear that McGillivray has some grand plot

¹ James Kelly joined the N.W.C. service in 1820. He was stationed in Athabaska in 1820-1.

² Thomas O'Hara, an Irishman, sergeant in the Voltiguers Regiment. He left the army to join the service of the N.W.C. as a clerk and he was stationed at Fort Chipewyan in 1820-1. In January 1821 he deserted the N.W.C. but returned to its service. Cf. *infra*, pp. 206, 209, 212, 297.

³ Probably James Kelly had also been a member of the Voltiguers Regiment.

October in contemplation against us, but he is unacquainted with the
 1820 particulars. Received a supply of fish from the Big Island this
 [fo. 36] Evening: for the last three days we have lived entirely on Flour.

19th, Thursday: The English Chief and his sons gone to their Wintering ground; gave them a salute of Fire arms at parting: the N.W. sent a canoe after them, and I regret we are so weakly manned that we cannot spare one to winter with them. The N.W. Coys Watch House is about twelve yards distant from our corner Bastion and projects about five yards beyond the front of our Fort towards the Lake, so that from their back windows they command a full view of all our proceedings which is extremely unpleasant. In order to remove this eye sore I requested Mr. Oxley to superintend the erection of a few Stockades to run in a line from the corner of our Bastion towards the face of the bank:—While preparing the Timber and digging a trench for the Stockades, Mr. S. McGillivray attended by several of his people under arms came out and ordered him in a peremptory tone not to erect the Stockades, Mr. Oxley told him he did so by my orders and that he should proceed; he however came into my room where I was occupied writing and informed me of the circumstance; I now saw it was necessary to carry my point without ceremony as forbearance in this instance might be construed into submission and encourage them to renew their arbitrary and atrocious proceedings, I therefore called the Gentlemen together, also three or four most confidential men and after explaining the business requested they would support me in case of need; they were instantly in readiness; I then proceeded to the spot accompanied by Mr. Oxley and directed the workmen to go on with their business: on my arrival Simon McGillivray, Soucisse, Wilburner,¹ and several others came out, each armed with a dirk and brace of large pistols, not fastened as usual in their belts, but held openly to view in their hands. I shall here repeat the conversation that took place verbatim, in case it may be of importance at any future period.

¹ A Canadian combining the duties of clerk and bully in the N.W.C. In 1820 he was in charge of the N.W.C. post at Fond du Lac and he was sent from there to the N.W.C. Watch House on Lake Athabaska.

When standing close to McGillivray on the bank of the Trench I remarked, 'My name is Simpson, I presume yours is McGillivray', he replied: 'it is.'—I then said, 'I intend erecting these Stockades from the corner of the Bastion in a direct line to that stump' (pointing to the stump of a Tree, about five feet within another stump which is understood to be the boundary of the two establishments) 'pray Sir, what are your objections?' He answered: 'I understood from Mr. Oxley that he intended to run them beyond the boundary line which I shall not permit.' I rejoined: 'we have no intention to encroach on what is understood to be the line of demarkation, nor shall we tamely submit to any encroachment on our rights, we are inclined to be quiet orderly neighbours if permitted to be so, but are determined to maintain our privileges with firmness, and shall promptly resent any injury or insult that may be offered.' He sullenly replied: 'time will show.' In the interim my Tarrier [*sic*] Dog Boxer (a very playful fellow) was amusing himself with a stick close to Soucisses feet, and while the Bully was regarding him with an ill natured look, as if about to give him a kick, I with a smile addressed the dog, 'come here Boxer, you do not seem to be aware that you are committing a trespass.' McGillivray with a good deal of asperity observed: 'We have no intention to molest your dog Sir,' to which I replied: 'nor shall you his Master with impunity.' Here ended the conversation; McGillivray and his bullies retired somewhat crest fallen, and in the course of two hours afterwards, the fence was completed and an annoyance removed which has been a source of great vexation to the inmates of Fort Wedderburne since it has been established.

20th, Friday: My anxiety about our establishment at Pierre au Calumit was this morning relieved by the arrival of Mr. Greill; he has succeeded in securing two good Fort Hunters, who have already laid in a six weeks stock of provisions, and half the Indians (twelve in number all Crees) of that neighbourhood have joined him, been equipped and gone to their hunting grounds in two bands, each attended by one of our men. The N.W. people attempted to prevent his communicating with the Indians, but the old Soldier was not to be diverted from his

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[fo. 37]

October purpose by their empty threats. He expects to secure a few
 1820 packs furs, also a considerable stock of provisions for the Brigade in Spring; and hopes to make a good Fishery at a Lake two days march from the Fort. The N.W. Indians are attended by an Interpreter and three men, they are to bring their furs and provisions to the Salt Springs (25 miles distant from our Post)¹ early in April where they will receive their supplies, and if Greill can reserve a few Galls. Rum, he will be at the place of rendezvous; the Crees have an insatiable thirst for spirituous liquors, and if our Opponents are not very well provided with that article, he expects to come in for a share of the spoil. Mr. Greill alleges that the object of his present visit is to receive a supply of goods, I am not however inclined to give him credit for all the merit he claims, in having performed a four days journey in two days and a half alone, and at this season of the year, out of pure zeal in the cause of his employers, and he at length admits that Cupid in some measure prompted him in the undertaking; the fact is, that he came to reclaim a frail fair one, who during his absence at the Depot, put herself under the protection of Mr. Brown; each Gentleman advanced powerful claims to the Prize, it was at length agreed through my suggestion, that the Lady should be permitted to take her choice, and after some consideration she cast a sheeps eye towards the Veteran, who in the evening gave a treat to the people as customary on such felicitous events.

21st, Saturday: The Canadians are really worse than Indians, they cannot enjoy themselves in moderation; Greill's treat has thrown the whole Fort into confusion, the people are all drunk and no work done: Lamallice the Guide and Bouche the Interpreter are even more troublesome than any of the common men; I think these fellows have a warm side towards our Opponents, they tell me various circumstances that take place in the other Fort, and I have no doubt but every thing
 [fo. 38] that occurs here is communicated by them; Mr. Oxley this forenoon discovered them conversing privately with Soucisse

¹ The Salt Springs (near the Pitch Springs) on Athabaska River were less than one day's journey from the H.B.C. post at Berens House, where Greill was stationed. Cf. *supra*, p. 39.

and two N.W. Clerks in the Woods; I questioned them particularly on the subject, but they declared that the meeting was purely accidental, I am however of a different opinion and have given positive orders that all communication must from henceforth be broke off. The weather for nearly a fortnight past has been remarkably fine, not a cloud to be seen in the Firmament, but it's serenity I think is now terminated for this season, as an impending storm threatens us with the immediate approach of Winter. Wrote the following Letter, vizt.:

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FORT WEDDERBURNE, 21st Oct., 1820.

MR. JOSEPH GREILL.

SIR

The report you have given me of your arrangements at Pierre au Calumit is very satisfactory, and I trust that the returns of your Post in Spring will bear testimony that your zeal and attention to the Interests of the Company have been unremitting. Furs and provisions are the objects, to which your sole attention must be directed; the men who accompany the bands you have equipped will of course take into their possession every skin as it is brought into the encampment, and send them to the Fort by every opportunity that occurs. Mr. McDougald who is a good trader and understands the language will be usefully occupied in tripping after the N.W. Indians; some person should be regularly employed in traversing the country in search of their tracks, and when discovered, let them be followed up without delay; a little rum you know operates like a charm on the Crees, they cannot resist the temptation, and if the bait is properly managed every skin may be had from them. It will be necessary that Mr. McDougald encamps at the salt springs early in April in order to meet the N.W. Indians, who are appointed to assemble there for the purpose of delivering their hunts and receiving fresh supplies; I have reason to believe that our Opponents are deficient in the article of Spirits, and if he plays his cards well, he may do great things: the Keg (which you have an order to receive from the Isle ala Crosse canoe) will be an abundant stock both for your

October De-ruinnes¹ & Summer Trade, and I expect you will turn it
 1820 to good account; none must be sold to the people unless it is a
 Pint to each after their Xmas regale. I look to your Post for a
 very abundant supply of Provisions in spring; your Fort
 Hunters if industrious should enable you to lay up a very con-
 siderable stock and in order that it may not be consumed, I
 have to request that immediately after the ice takes, Mr.
 McDougald and two men, be sent to the Fishery, and lay up
 a six months stock which they can do in about three weeks if
 sufficiently industrious; thereafter one man with a train of
 Dogs should be constantly employed in hauling Fish to the
 Fort, which he can abundantly supply, and on no consideration
 let the people have more than one meal of animal food p. week
 except when on Deruines. Have the goodness to send all the
 Pemican you can spare by the return Express from Isle ala
 Crosse independent of their provisions for the Journey, and let
 me have a 60 lb. bag fine for my Peace River Journey.²—We
 are very deficient of shoe leather, you will therefore send a
 supply by that conveyance: Madam Greill I understand is an
 adept at skin Dressing, and if she will have the goodness to
 prepare a few it will be obliging. If you find on inspecting the
 bale of goods in the Isle ala Crosse Canoe, that there are no
 files, you will detain one of the men, and send him accompanied
 by one from your Post to Lac La Loche for a supply, if none
 are to be had there, they must proceed to Isle ala Crosse and
 return without delay, as we have not a File in the Fort to whet
 an axe: if there are any in the bale take two for the use of your
 Post, and let the Bale be carefully repacked and forwarded. It
 is unnecessary to inform an old Soldier that in annoying the
 Enemy you render an essential service to the cause of your
 employers, and wishing you a prosperous campaign, I remain
 Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

¹ A term denoting trade carried on in the Indian camps instead of at the trading posts. 'Etre en derouine' or 'courir la derouine' means to be away from one's home. For examples of derouines, cf. *infra*, pp. 296, 298 *et seq.*

² Cf. *supra*, p. 55.

22nd, Sunday : Our Opponents at the Watch House have been actively employed (altho' Sunday) in rafting and preparing Timber, which from it's appearance I conceive to be intended for a Bastion; this is something like a declaration of hostilities. While sitting at dinner this afternoon, one of our men James Taylor¹ burst into the Hall crying, and evidently in great pain and terror; on enquiring into the cause, he informed me that while passing quietly at a little distance (about 10 yds.) from the N.W. Watch House with a load of firewood upon his shoulder, he was accosted by one Linton² a Clerk and asked if he was not aware that he had committed a trespass by walking so near the buildings. Before the man had time to reply one Wilburner a Canadian Half Bully, half Clerk, knocked him down, and while laying on the ground, beat and kicked him in a most inhuman manner, after having fully satiated his revenge, he permitted the poor fellow to crawl away detaining his cap and firewood as a trophy of Victory. Being desirous to avoid any thing like a serious rupture with our Opponents, I directed Lamallice to call on Mr. Simon McGillivray and require an explanation of this wanton and violent outrage, also to demand a restoration of the man's cap and firewood; he returned in a few minutes and stated that Mr. McGillivray did not choose to enter into explanation, on the contrary justified Wilburner's conduct; he was permitted to bring the cap but the Firewood remained; I therefore put the Gentlemen under arms, manned the Bastion, and directed Taylor and another to go for the wood that was taken from him and authorised the man who accompanied him to shoot any person who interfered with them, and that we should protect them; fortunately the assault was not repeated and the men brought the Firewood along with them; when they had

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[fo. 39]

¹ An Orkney man engaged by the H.B.C. as a fisherman in 1818. He was stationed at Edmonton in 1819-20 and at Fort Wedderburn in 1820-1. Brown, in his report on Lake Athabaska, describes him as 'a very good and interested servant'.

² George Linton was an Englishman who entered the N.W.C. service as an apprentice clerk in 1819. At the amalgamation between the two companies in 1821 he entered the H.B.C. service. He was drowned in 1836.

October returned inside our Stockades; the man who assisted Taylor in
 1820 carrying the wood, fired off his Pistol into the Lake; McGillivray on hearing the report asked in an authoritative tone of voice, by whose directions the pistol was fired off, Mr. Oxley being next him replied that he conceived the Pistol was fired into the Lake for the purpose of unloading it, I at the same time asked if it was by his authority that his Bully had so wantonly assaulted the man; he attempted to justify Wilburner's conduct on the ground that Taylor passed so near their buildings, and authorised me to chastise his men, in a similar manner if they committed any Trespass on our grounds, I told him, that we should take no other Law than that of Self defence in our own hands, and gave him solemn warning never to assault, interfere with, or insult any person connected with the Honble. H.B. Coy., as I was determined to protect them whatever might be the consequences. Here the matter rested and both parties retired. McGillivrays intentions are now unmasked and it will be necessary to watch him with the utmost vigilance.

23rd, Monday: Mr. Greill took his departure early this morning for Beren's House. About eight O'Clock A.M. Mr. Brown came into my room and informed me that the N.W. were digging the foundation of a Bastion, at the distance of two feet from our Bastion, and immediately in front of it, thereby encroaching about three feet within the line that was acknowledged by Mr. McGillivray on the 19th Inst. to be the boundary of the two establishments. I immediately determined on resisting this encroachment, and being desirous if possible to avoid hostilities requested Mr. Brown to go out alone to the side of our Stockades, and caution Mr. McGillivray not to attempt building on our ground. He accordingly went but Mr. McGillivray treated his remonstrance with a most ineffable contempt, and intimated his intention of erecting the building on the site lined out, as he now recollected that the boundary line was within the Stockades of our Fort; at this time he was superintending the Workmen employed. Upon Mr. Brown's informing me the result of the interview, and after ascertaining that the boundary line acknowledged on the 19th was correct, I resolved that they should not thus invade

the Company's rights with impunity and forthwith to resist the encroachment by force if necessary. While conversing with the Gentlemen on the subject, Mr. Grignon (a Constable for the District of Montreal who had been absent since the 18th Inst.) unexpectedly arrived, on learning the circumstances of the case he informed me that he had a Warrant in his possession against the said Simon McGillivray and would by virtue of that instrument apprehend him:¹—in reply, I told him (through Messrs. Chastellain, Oxley, Clouston & Brown as Interpreters and Witnesses to guard against misunderstanding) that I could not interfere or give any sanction or instructions to him in his Official capacity as a Constable, that whatever was done in that way must be on his own responsibility, but that it was my province to protect the Company's rights and that I was now about to act in conformity: he rejoined, that he intended to do his duty, and that he would call upon those around him to assist in the Kings-name if necessary; I then said, that if Legally called upon for protection or assistance, we had no alternative. Breakfast being announced the conference broke up. When the cloth was removed, I called the Gentlemen and several of our people together; requested they would support me if necessary, and that all should be furnished with the means of defence; they unanimously agreed to act in strict obedience to my directions: arms and ammunition were brought into the Hall, and I shewed the example by loading

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[fo. 40]

¹ Grignon was also a clerk in the H.B.C. service, though unable to read or write. Cf. *supra*, p. 83 and Appendix B.

On July 17th, 1819, Governor William Williams wrote 'I have just forwarded some Bench warrants into the Athabaska, to arrest some criminals who are reposing themselves in the supposed lap of security. Mr. Amable Grignon, to whom they are addressed, is in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company'. Williams, at the same time, instructed Grignon to touch the prisoner and to say 'I arrest you in the King's name', to show his warrant and to read the name in it (which Grignon could not do). 'This is all that is required, except to have him well secured at Fort Wedderburn'. Grignon actually 'collared' his prisoner, instead of touching him. Simpson himself 'had his private doubts' about the warrant issued against McGillivray, cf. *infra*, p. 129. Simpson feared the wrong man had been arrested. His other doubts were as to whether a copy of another warrant, which unmistakably referred to this Simon McGillivray, was valid, or whether the original warrant was needed.

October my double barrel'd gun and pistols with Ball; when in readi-
 1820 ness I ordered a few men into the Bastion and directed the
 others to accompany me, but gave positive orders that no gun
 should be fired until I gave the signal, which was only to be the
 case in the event of my being attacked. I then proceeded
 attended by Messrs. Brown, Oxley, Clouston & Grignon with
 about half a dozen men to the ground which the N.W. had
 prepared as the foundation of the Bastion outside the Stockades.
 Mr. McGillivray and several people armed immediately joined
 us, he came up to the spot where I stood with his hand on the
 hilt of his Dagger, and when close to each other I said, 'Mr.
 McGillivray I shall be glad to have some further conversation
 with you on the subject of this boundary line,' he was about to
 reply when Mr. Grignon collared him and said 'I arrest you in
 the Kings name,' he made some resistance and the Officer
 called out 'I demand your assistance in the Kings name' on
 which two of our people rushed upon the prisoner disarmed
 and conveyed him into Fort Wedderburne. Some of the N.W.
 people were about to fire, but on seeing us prepared to return
 the compliment, they made a precipitate retreat; the Officer
 narrowly escaped being shot by Wilburner, but while his
 finger was on the trigger, the other presented a dagger to his
 Breast, which gave him an active pair of heels, and the villain
 Soucisse took refuge in the woods. On my return into the
 Fort I found Mr. McGillivray venting his spleen in a torrent
 of abuse, he inveighed against me with much warmth, declared
 that the arrest was illegal, and that Warrts. would be issued
 against the whole party forthwith. I replied, that the Officer
 had acted on his own responsibility and could alone be liable
 for the consequences. In the course of the day received the
 following Letter from Mr. Keith:

[fo. 41]

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 23rd Oct., 1820.

To MR. SIMPSON, or the Superintendent of the }
 H.B. Coys. affairs at Fort Wedderburne. }

SIR,

Being informed that you and your people of the H.B.
 Coy. have outrageously and violently assaulted the person of

Mr. S. McGillivray, Junr., of the N.W. Coy., and have forcibly seized and detained him prisoner in your Fort,—I demand to be informed on what grounds and by what authority you have permitted this outrageous act, and whether you are determined to persist in keeping him a prisoner in Fort Wedderburne, against which proceeding I hereby enter a protest on the part of the N.W. Coy. and demand his release without loss of time. I require an answer to this note in an hour from hence, *i.e.* after it's delivery to your people.—and am, Sir, Yours &c., &c.
(signed) GEORGE KEITH.

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To which I made the following reply:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 23rd Oct., 1820.

MR. GEORGE KEITH, }
Fort Chipewyan. }

SIR,

In reply to your note, I beg leave to inform you, that neither myself nor any other person acting for or in behalf of the Honble. H.B. Coy., did in that capacity arrest the person of Mr. Simon McGillivray. A Contstable of the District of Montreal did however apprehend and now detains him by virtue of a Warrant in his possession, and some of the people belonging to this establishment being called upon to assist him in the Kings name, they necessarily complied.—I am, Sir, Yours, &c., &c.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Mr. McGillivray also addressed a Letter to Mr. Keith, which was returned to him by the Officers directions, vide N.W. Correspondence Book page.¹ The Officer demanded accomodation for the prisoner, he is put into Mr. Oxley's Room, which is the best in the Fort, and has got every comfort our Larder and cellar can afford. We have levelled the ground which the N.W. dug up within our boundary line, and for the present their operations are suspended. Being apprehensive of

¹ A N.W.C. Correspondence Book. This volume is now lost.

October an attack in the course of the night, we have mounted a Guard
1820 of three men and an Officer which is to be regularly maintained
in future.

24th, Tuesday : Our Opponents at the Watch House have renewed their building operations, but on their own side of the Boundary line, so that we cannot interfere with them. Recd. the following Letter from Mr. Keith covering one for Mr. McGillivray which was forwarded to him.

FORT CHIPEWYAN, *24th Sept.* [sic], 1820.

MR. GEO. SIMPSON.

SIR,

Your note of yesterday was duly handed to me. It by no means justifies the outrageous seizure of the person of Mr. Simon McGillivray, much less the detaining him a prisoner in your Fort. That a Constable of the District of Montreal should arrest a person in the Indian Territories of British America and detain him a Prisoner, excepting in cases of the highest criminality of which Mr. Simon McGillivray, Junr., is perfectly innocent, is certainly an absolute mockery of all Law and Justice. It is also natural to presume that the Warrt. is much of a piece with the Legal powers of the Constable. I therefore again protest against the illegal act of the arrest and detention of the person of Mr. Simon McGillivray and demand his immediate release. In observing a different line of conduct you must be aware of the direful future consequences. This must not be considered as a threat. Justice and the cause of humanity are the objects of this address, from Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. KEITH.

N.B.—An answer is expected without delay.

G. K.

Mr. Simpson is requested to cause the note to Mr. Simon McGillivray's address to be duly delivered.

G. K.

To which I made the following reply:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 24th Oct., 1820.

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MR. GEORGE KEITH.

SIR,

I have already so fully explained myself on the subject of Mr. McGillivrays arrest, that I conceive it unnecessary in the present stage of the business to enlarge thereon, and must take the liberty of referring you to the Officer for any further information you may require; the contents of your Letters have been communicated to him, he feels satisfied as to the legality of the proceeding, and will on no account consent to Mr. McGillivrays release. I am most anxious to avoid any collision with the N.W. Coy., but take this opportunity of intimating that I shall on all occasions with firmness and determination maintain the rights of the Honble. Hudsons Bay Co., their property, and the persons of their servants by every means within my power, and endeavour to guard against 'the direful future consequences' alluded to.—Your Letter to Mr. McGillivray has been handed to him. I am, Sir,

Your Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Mr. McGillivray requested an interview with me, in which he begged that I would exert my influence with the Officer to receive Bail for his appearance at Montreal in the month of Septr., 1821; and that Mr. Keith would give his personal Bond as security, also some other Gentleman belonging to the N.W. Coy. After communicating with the Officer on the subject, I told Mr. McGillivray that he was doubtful how far [fo. 42] he would be justified in accepting Bail for his appearance; but at all events that he could not think of taking the personal security of any Gentleman connected with the N.W. Coy. I however told Mr. McGillivray that if he would lodge to the same amount, as A. N. McLeod exacted of Mr. Clarke,¹ say 30 Pieces Goods or 30 Packs Beaver in my hands as an indemnity, I had no objections to offer myself as his security. This

¹ For this surrender of H.B.C. property by John Clarke, see Appendix B, John Clarke, and A. N. McLeod.

October arrangement he declined entering into stating that he was
1820 no Partner, and therefore had no controul over the N.W.
property.

25th, Wednesday: Severe frost during the night. Mr. McGillivray wrote Mr. Keith a Letter which he left open for the inspection of the Officer: it dwelt on the illegality of the arrest, and as the Officer conceived that Mr. Keith had some measure in contemplation for the rescue of the Prisoner, he declined forwarding it. In the course of the day the Prisoner's Woman applied for permission to see him; she was searched by the Women to guard against the conveyance of arms or private communications, and they had an interview in presence of Mr. Chastellain. She requested permission to remain with him in the Fort, and as Mr. Clarke was allowed the privilege of having his woman while detained by the N.W. Coy., I told Mr. McGillivray he might have the same indulgence, provided he gave me his word of Honor that he would hold no private correspondence with the North West and would make no attempt to escape, which he assented to:—Sent four men to the Big Island for fish. Twelve men cutting firewood and three repairing Houses.

26th, Thursday: Fine clear frosty weather. The people employed as yesterday. Our House and Stores overrun with mice, they have injured a few skins, we have therefore packed our furs securely and hung them up in the Garret where I think they will be safe. Disappointed in our hopes of receiving a supply of Fish from the Big Island so that Officers and men are on short allowance. The prisoner's woman and two children came to day, she brought a note from Mr. Keith, also a few necessaries for him. Previous to her joining him I received his solemn promise and word of Honor that he will carry on no private correspondence with the N.W. Coy., but that any communication that passes or re-passes shall be open to the Officer's inspection; also that his woman shall not cross the gates of the Fort unless attended by some of our people: he has moreover pledged his Honor, that he will make no attempt to escape, this however we must endeavour to guard against, as the Gentleman's word of Honor can scarcely be taken as a

collateral security, and must not supersede the use of Bolts and Bars. October
1820

27th, Friday : Disagreeable weather and appearance of snow. Sent nine men to the fishery as we have not provisions for them here. Messrs. Keith & McGillivray correspond regularly; the state of the prisoner's health is the principal topic: in one of the notes there are some metaphorical words which we cannot decipher. Opened a door in the partition between the Officer and prisoner's rooms in order that the man who attends him may be within hearing, and prevent the necessity of opening the outer door on all occasions which might facilitate his escape. Invited him to spend the Evening in my room; our conversation was general and nothing transpired worthy of remark. [fo. 43]

28th, Saturday : Our stock of Provisions is now reduced to four bags Flour, and if the Lake does not soon set fast, I fear we shall be exposed to serious privations. The N.W. are getting on rapidly with their Bastion, and as there is little doubt but they have some desperate enterprize in view, I have determined on erecting a similar building on the Rock behind our house, which will command their Houses and communication with the water; it is a difficult undertaking for the people in their present half famished state, I however pointed out the necessity of the measure, and promised them a Dance when finished if they would commence operations tomorrow, (Sunday) which after a dram they cheerfully agreed to do.

29th, Sunday : The weather cold and unpleasant with Hail showers. Nine men (all our people about the Fort) preparing Timber for the Bastion; one of them Adams severely hurt by a tree falling over him, but I trust his case is not dangerous; it will however disable him for some months. Received a most seasonable supply of Fish from the Big Island and Old Fort. Sent Lamallice to superintend the Fishery.

30th, Monday : The people employed as yesterday. Nothing worthy of remark to day.

31st, Tuesday : Incessant rain during the day, and the people unable to work out of Doors. Notes exchanged between Keith & McGillivray containing some ill natured

October remarks, their impertinent observations will not however
 1820 induce me to relax in my attentions to the Prisoner who sat
 with me a couple of hours this evening. Our conversation was
 chiefly about the state of the Country, situation of the Indians,
 &c. I endeavoured to draw some remarks from him on the
 New Caladonia and Grand River¹ Trade, but he was very
 guarded in his observations, and took much pains to convince
 me that the natives of the Columbia & New Caladonia were
 very treacherous and hostile to Europeans, which I suspect is
 intended to prepare me for melancholy accounts of Mr.
 Giasson and his party.

November 1820

November 1st, *Wednesday*: This being 'All Saints Day', the people
 1820 have made a close holyday of it. Winter has now fairly made
 it's appearance, the Frost is severe and there is a sprinkling of
 Snow on the ground; if the Wind abates the Lake will be fast
 in the course of a day or two. This is an unusual late season
 as the Lake usually takes from the 15th to the 20th Oct. and
 has been fast as early as the 7th.

2nd, *Thursday*: Blowing fresh with snow and intense frost.
 Lamallice arrived with 230 fish. Mr. Keith in his last note
 speaks of the rigour of Mr. McGillivray's confinement; his
 complaint is very unjust as he is treated with every mark of
 attention, I therefore directed Mr. Brown to copy the following
 [fo. 44] memorandum in the Officer's Name, on the envelope of a note
 which Mr. McGillivray wrote him to day, vizt.:

'Mr. Grignon takes this opportunity of undeceiving Mr.
 Keith as to the rigour with which he supposes Mr. McGillivray
 is confined, and which alone exists in Mr. Keith's prolific
 imagination: Mr. McGillivray is at liberty to take as much
 exercise as suits his inclination; he is on his parole of honor,
 and has the range of Fort Wedderburne at all hours, where he
 is looked upon more as a Visiter than in any other character
 and treated as such with every mark of politeness, attention and
 hospitality.'

¹ The Mackenzie River.

3rd, Friday: Sent four men to the Big Island, altho' the quantities of Ice now render the passage dangerous, but we have no alternative as our stock of provisions is very low. The people employed at the Bastion, burning charcoal, mudding houses, &c., &c. November 1820

4th, Saturday: The weather very boisterous and people employed as yesterday. Mr. McGillivray passed the evening in my room, he is cheerful and the 'ennui' occasioned by his confinement now wears off, but appears in bad Health; he informed me that the Report of the Earl of Selkirks Death was confirmed, and that his Father¹ brought the information from England, I however still indulge the hope that his statement is erroneous. He also says that a negotiation between the Committee & N.W. Agents was nearly concluded and that a coalition was on the eve of being effected; ² a proper understanding with some members of the N.W. Coy. would in my humble opinion be desirable, but that association should be carefully weeded previous to forming any connection, otherways the reputation of the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy. will suffer an indelible stain.

5th, Sunday: The frost was very severe last night, and the Lake is one solid mass of Ice to day. Blowing fresh with occasional snow showers. The dogs are now on the eve of being called into requisition, and the people employ their leisure hours in arranging their trains and harness. This has been a field day with them, and they have suffered woefully for their want of discipline; these useful animals have certainly no sinecure of it in this Country; from the beginning of November until the latter end of May they are daily in Harness, hard wrought and sparingly fed; if in tolerable condition at the end of the season, many of them are eaten by their Masters, and those who have the good fortune of being so lean as to escape the Kettle are allowed to starve the rest of the year. They are

¹ Simon McGillivray's father was the Hon. William McGillivray. Cf. Appendix B.

² The earliest official intimation about a possible amalgamation with the N.W.C. made by the Committee of the H.B.C. to its officials is to be found in a letter written by the Committee to Governor Williams on 26th February, 1821.

November a great article of trafic amongst the Canadians who value a dog
 1820 according to his points as we estimate a Horse in the civilized world. Three active dogs have been known to run ten miles within the hour drawing a cariole and passenger with the driver standing behind and fifty pounds of luggage; a Thousand to fifteen hundred livres is no unusual price for a good train, say 3 dogs. By proper attention to the breeding of dogs the Company may make a very profitable trade of them and in spring I intend to issue an Order that none shall keep bitches except the Compy., by this arrangement we shall always have a good stock of dogs, and can supply the people at fair prices; hitherto the men and Officers have been allowed to keep bitches, and when the Comy. require dogs they must give enormous prices. We are this season greatly in want of dogs, and if the Horse had not been got from Peace River we must have foregone the comfort of Fires: half a dozen Horses may be kept here at
 [fo. 45] little expense, and they would be found of most essential benefit in hauling fish, and other necessary work about the Fort, which occupies more than one half of our people, whereas three men with six horses and a sufficient number of dogs could do all the draught work throughout the Winter. I see no reason why Rein Deer should not be employed in this country as in the North of Europe, and intend giving orders that the experiment be tried next season.¹

6th, Monday: The weather continues very cold, intense frost with N.E. wind. The people employed as usual at the Bastion, cutting Firewood and mudding Houses; our stock of fish is low and they are again on short allowance.

7th, Tuesday: The N.W. I understand are equally short of provisions as we are, they made an attempt to go to the Fishery to day with Trains but the ice was not sufficiently strong. I asked the Prisoner to sit with me in the Evening, but he politely declined leaving his own room in future: he very likely perceives that I court his society more for the purpose of eliciting information from him, than out of respect, and to avoid the risk of committing himself prefers solitude.

¹ Cf. *infra* p. 108.

8th, *Wednesday*: Mr. Vigneau arrived from Peace River November to day accompanied by Larance; ¹ he brings Letters from St. Marys up to the 20th Octr. and from Colville House to the 27th. Mr. Finlayson had arrived on the 16th Ultimo and found the business of that Post in a tolerable state. The Indians were staunch notwithstanding the malicious reports circulated by our Opponents, and the dearth of goods for the summer trade, they were equipped, made fair promises, and went to their hunting grounds contented; he had secured Baptste. Bisson as his principal Fort Hunter, also several good Beaver Indians, so that there is no danger to be apprehended from a scarcity of Provisions. He has also secured Twenty bags Pemican and a quantity of dried provisions from Gladeau ² the Freeman, and is promised twenty bags more pemican in spring; this will be an abundant supply for New Caladonia and the Brigade going out as far as Portage La Loche. Mr. Yale had started for Fort de Pinnette with ten men, and the Iroquois intended for New Caladonia. No accounts of Mr. Giasson, this is extraordinary as he was to have been at the Rocky Mountain Portage ³ on the 20th Septr., and if the canoes did not meet him there, he was to come on immediately to St. Marys; I fear some accident has happened him, suspicion points to the villain Black, who left here accompanied by Durocher and some other desperate characters about the 12th June for Peace River with the intention of crossing the Mountain; this Outlaw is so callous to every honourable or manly feeling that it is not unreasonable to suspect him of the blackest acts, and if Giasson does not soon make his appearance, I have

¹ Either Jean Baptiste Larance, a Canadian middleman who joined the H.B.C. service in 1817 and was at Cumberland House in 1818-19, in the Athabaska district in 1819-20 and at Peace River in 1820-1; or Basil Larance, a Canadian steersman born in 1798, and engaged by the H.B.C. in 1816 and stationed at Peace River in 1818-19, in the Athabaska district in 1819-20 and again at Peace River in 1820-21.

² Probably a former servant of the H.B.C. His name is mentioned in the St. Mary's, Peace River, Journal for 1820-21.

³ Cf. p. 6, n. 3. The arrangement here referred to was made by Giasson, writing from Sheep's River, to Colin Robertson, in March 1820.

November little doubt but he and his party have fallen a sacrifice to the
 1820 blood thirsty machinations of our Opponents. The Iroquois
 will not engage for the Mountain unless they hear of Giasson's
 safety. The N.W. have got a new Post opposed to Mr.
 Finlayson about four miles below St. Marys, one Campbell¹
 [fo. 46] in charge. Mr. Thomas had secured a few furs in the course
 of the summer, that Gentleman will I hope contrary to my
 expectation make himself useful to Mr. Finlayson. Mr.
 McBean writes me from Colville House under date 27th
 Ultmo. that Mr. Laronde had equiped twelve Hunters besides
 lads on easy terms, and sent them to their wintering grounds,
 they also were satisfied and made fair promises in the course of
 the summer about Four packs Furs had been secured, also a
 few provisions. Three men had been sent to a Fall Fishery at
 Loon Lake² two days march from Colville House, if successful
 we may expect a considerable quantity of provisions in Spring.
 Mr. Finlayson found two Hay's River Indians at Colville
 House, they informed him that the N.W. had no post there
 and that we were expected to have established it this Fall, the
 Indians waited our arrival & had a quantity of Furs and
 provisions; Mr. Laronde intended to send for their furs by the
 first ice, it is but five days march from Colville House and if
 established I think it ought to be an outpost from thence on
 account of it's proximity; there is no water communication
 except by the Gt. Slave Lake River, the supplies must therefore
 be sent by that Route and the returns brought overland to
 Colville House in Spring. If Hay's River is established I do
 not think it will be necessary to settle Rivierre aux L'orr,³ as
 the Posts would interfere with each other; the same Indians
 frequent both places and do not exceed 60 to 65 Hunters.
 There is an Outpost from Fort Vermillion about to be estab-
 lished close to Colville House, so that they are determined to

¹ Colin Campbell, see Appendix B.

² A small lake about six miles long and two miles wide, connected with the Loon River. The position of the lake is about 115° 35' long. west and 59° 40' lat. north.

³ Liard River, which originates in the Cassiar Mountains and flows into the Mackenzie River at Fort Simpson after a course of about 800 miles.

oppose us at all points. Mr. Finlayson is not so full and explicit in his communications as could have been desirable. Mr. Vigneau met a N.W. Express about three days march from hence. November 1820

9th, Thursday: Fine clear weather, the people variously employed about the Fort. Mr. Grignon brought a charge against Mr. Chastellain and his wife of intimacy with the Prisoner, and giving him private information of our proceedings; examined the parties and found there were some grounds for the accusation, and directed that no visits should be paid him in future, except on special business and with the Officer's consent.

10th, Friday: Sent four trains to the Old Fort for fish and received a supply from there. The prisoner requested his Friends at the Watch House to send him a few Pickerel; this application is no doubt intended to inform them of the state of our provision store. Grignon and Chastellain had a serious misunderstanding on account of the charge brought yesterday against the latter: Pistols were called for but Chastellain showed the White Feather and submitted to have his nose twisted. I have been confined to my room for some days past through indisposition but now a convalescent.

11th, Saturday: Sent Clouston to the Old Fort and Big Island to make some arrangement with the Fishermen. Received three trains of fish. I am sorry to learn that the four men who were sent to the Big Island on the 3rd had nearly perished; their Canoe was set fast in the Lake, and being unable either to proceed or return, they providentially got to a small Island where they remained six days without any sustenance until the Ice was sufficiently strong to bear; one of them, Adams, who had the accident on the 29th Ult. is in a very dangerous state. [fo. 47]

12th, Sunday: Had an interview with the Prisoner, he was inclined to converse on the subject of his confinement, but I changed the topic. In the course of the day he wrote a note to Mr. Keith, in which he complains of the rigour of his confinement and it's illegality, and touches on a conversation he had with me on the subject of bail; the Letter is full of

November misrepresentation and if allowed to pass without comment,
 1820 it might hereafter be construed into an admission of its veracity, I therefore directed Mr. Vignau to copy the following note in the Officer's name, which was forwarded with Mr. McGillivray's Letter:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 12th Novr., 1820.

MR. GEO. KEITH.

SIR,

Had I forwarded the enclosed note, without making some comment thereon, my silence might be construed into an admission of the correctness of Mr. McGillivray's statements; I must therefore take the liberty of remarking that, that Gentleman cannot justly complain of vigorous confinement, as he is at liberty to suit his own inclination as to the quantum of exercise, and to my certain knowledge every comfort which Fort Wedderburne can afford is at his service. In arresting him I have acted on my own judgement and responsibility and must therefore abide by the consequences. If unjustly apprehended the Laws of his country will no doubt afford him redress; but his observations do not shake my opinion as to the legality of the measure. Mr. McGillivray seems to have misunderstood my remarks on the subject of admitting him to Bail, as I never did agree to accept Mr. Simpson or the North West Coys. public property as his security: the proposition was not made to me and if it had I am doubtful that I could have acceded to it, as altho I was charged with the execution of the Warrant, no discretionary power has been vested in me in regard to Bail.

I am, Sir, Your mo. obedt. Servt.

(signed) AMABLE GRIGNON.

Mr. Keith's 'direful future consequences' are probably at hand, as I understand he now threatens lustily; he may perhaps find out his mistake when too late as we are prepared to defend ourselves.

13th, Monday: Clouston returned from the Old Fort and Big Island where every thing goes on well. Two Lads came

in this morning from our Fort Hunters who are actually starving. They have lived on Babiche & Leather for several days, and imagine that our Opponents have 'thrown bad Medicine on them.' My Oracle with the aid of a snow shower will however break the spell: the Snow is now so hard and crisp that the Animals are alarmed before the Hunters can get within gun shot of them, which accounts for their bad success, but these poor superstitious creatures will not take the trouble of looking into causes. Some of our Gentlemen got into the humour of a Glass of Grog last night after I retired to bed, and indulged themselves rather freely; it is however the first transgression of the kind, and I think will be the last while I am in Fort Wedderburne.

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14th, Tuesday: Fine clear Weather. The people employed in hauling fish, erecting the Bastion, cutting Firewood and repairing Nets. Bouche returned from the Big Island where he has been about a fortnight in search of Sled timber but found none, I suspect he has idled his time away. Wrote the following Letters:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, *14th Nov., 1820.*

MR. GEO. PETER ANDRIES, }
Harrisons House }

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your Letter by Mr. Grignon, also the Furs and provisions. The English Chief and his band are highly pleased, and I think will do some good here. Have the goodness to let me know by Mr. Miles, how matters go on at Harrisons House; that Gentleman no doubt has been very useful to you, and I hope to learn that you are likely to make large returns this season. Mr. Vigneau assures me that he will be a host of strength to you, he is young, active, and ambitious, you will therefore keep him on the alert; idle habits are easily contracted, and nothing is so ruinous to a young man, as being permitted to loiter his time about the Fort, you will therefore see the propriety of keeping him on the trip when necessary. I am anxious to know your views with

November regard to the Grand River, I think we should have two Posts
 1820 besides Hays River in that quarter; pray where do you think
 they should be established? and let me know your reasons for
 [fo. 48] settling the points you wish to establish. If Hay's River is
 established, do you think it will be necessary to settle Rivierre
 au l'ior? I suspect they would interfere with each other. We
 must not undertake too much at once, but as you know our
 means, you are best able to judge what can be done. Do not
 forget that the existence of our party, in a great measure
 depends on our Nets, I therefore hope that all your twine will
 be wrought in the course of the winter. Ask your Indians to
 secure in Spring half a dozen Cariboo or Rein Deer Fawns;
 if properly broke in I think they will be very useful on the
 Rivers & Lakes instead of Dogs. If you can spare a few Trains
 of provisions and some Fat, have the goodness to send it here,
 or if the people are absolutely required at your post, I will send
 for it in the course of next month. A few dressed skins and as
 much Babiche as you can spare are much required here. If
 you can let me have a Dressed Cariboo Skin in the Hair for a
 Capot I will feel obliged. Wishing you every success.

I remain, Dr. Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 14th November, 1820.

MR. R. S. MILES, }
 Harrisons House.}

DEAR SIR,

I am very anxious to see you safe back, and have there-
 fore to request that you will with as little delay as possible
 repair hither. Our Opponents have shewn a disposition to be
 troublesome, but are now tolerably quiet. Mr. McGillivray
 is at present an inmate of Fort Wedderburne. I have Letters
 from St. Marys up to the 20th and from Colville House to the
 27th Ultimo; at those dates, all well. The Isle ala Crosse
 Canoe not yet arrived. Have the goodness to get from Mr.

Andries his views with regard to McKenzie's River; *i.e.* how many posts, and where they are to be established, also his reasons for settling the particular points he means to establish, together with every information he can give you on the subject. Hays River I think should be established from Colville House, and ask if he thinks Mr. Laronde can make any preparations for that purpose in the course of the Spring. I hope there is no doubt of Mr. Andries undertaking the Grand River mission, sound him on the subject, and if you can prevail on him to renew his Engagement for two or three years at an advance of £20 to £30 get a Letter from him to that effect: His wife has much influence over him, and I understand objects to go further North; get to the weak side of her if possible, the promise of a present from the Depot may have some weight, she is a useful woman, and therefore must be humoured.—Some dressed Leather and Babiche are much wanted, and if you can get me a Cariboo skin for a Winter Capot I will feel obliged. With best wishes, I remain, Dr. Sir,

Yours very truly,

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

15th, Wednesday: Fine weather.—The people employed as yesterday. Bouche the Interpreter was last night directed to hold himself in readiness to go for some grease left 'en cache' by Mr. Vigneau from Peace River; this morning however he sent a message to Mr. Brown intimating that he would not bring the grease, that he intended selling his dogs and if the Comy. would not give 1200 livres for the train he would dispose of them to the North West: I took him to task for this piece of consummate disobedience & impertinence in presence of all the Officers and several of the men, gave him a severe reprimand, turned him out of the Hall and threatened him with Irons if he did not in future obey whatever orders may be given to him: in the course of the day he became very penitent, made a thousand apologies, and in Tears promised to do his duty from henceforward with alacrity; in consideration of his being a useful Fellow when he pleases, and staunch in time of danger or any particular emergency, I have again taken him

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November into favour, and the public example made of him will I think
 1820 have a good effect on our half Gentlemen and people; it is high time they should be brought into a proper state of discipline; their conduct last year both here and at St. Mary's was most disgraceful, but they now find that my orders are not to be disputed and therefore we have few instances of disobedience. Notes exchanged between Messrs. Keith & McGillivray, they calculate on making 'the authors of Mr. McGillivray's outrageous and unlawful confinement smart for the offence.'

16th, Thursday: Beautiful weather and remarkably warm for the season of the year;—Bouche and Wittman¹ gone for the Grease; Mr. Vigneau & Dumaine² to Harrisons House; and Delonee³ with the two Indian lads to join the Fort Hunters. The rest of the people employed as usual. Had a few minutes interview with Mr. McGillivray.

17th, Friday: Nothing worthy of remark to day.

18th, Saturday: The weather remarkably cold. I am glad to learn the Old Fort Fishery is at present unusually productive; there were yesterday 650 White fish taken out of the Nets weighing at least 2000 lbs. Received a note from Mr. Oxley intimating his intention of returning to England next season; he did not seem to think that his contract was binding, he is now however undeceived: our mode of living does not seem to agree with him: I did intend that he should accompany Andries to McKenzie's River, but have altered his destination as he will be a valuable man for New Caladonia, where it is probable he will have an opportunity of signalising himself in the anticipated opposition, as he seems to have a better stomach for fighting than starving. Our Bastion is at length completed and looks formidable; it commands the North West buildings.

¹ Joseph Whitman, a Canadian engaged by the H.B.C. as a middleman in 1819 and stationed in the Athabaska district, 1819-21.

² François Dumain, a Canadian middleman. Dumain joined the service of the H.B.C. in 1815 and was at Peace River 1818-19 and in the Athabaska district 1819-21. In August 1821 he went to Montreal.

³ Probably Louis Delonie, a Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1815. He was at Great Slave Lake 1818-19 and in the Athabaska District 1819-21. Cf. Appendix B.

19th, Sunday: The weather extremely cold and in the evening a little Snow. November 1820

20th, Monday: A quantity of snow fell last night and the weather very bad. Mr. Brown had an interview with the prisoner to day, in consequence of his applying to his friends at the Watch House for a broom and some moss.¹ His note was returned and his Keeper directed to furnish the articles required. The people employed in hauling fish, sawing Timber & cutting Firewood.

21st, Tuesday: Very boisterous weather and the cold so intense that our people cannot go to the Fishery: those coming from the Old Fort lost their way owing to the Drift and did not get home until late in the Evening. Bouche returned with the grease, he killed two Otters and made a rapid march of it, but consumed 17 lbs in addition to the provisions given for the trip. Messrs. Keith & McGillivray very affectionate and regular in their correspondence altho' I understand they are bad friends at bottom.

22nd, Wednesday: The weather exceedingly cold with drift and snow, and the people still unable to go to the Fishery.

23rd, Thursday: Mr. McGillivray sent for me this morning, and requested to know if I had given any instructions in regard to his Assassination, the question was so extraordinary that I could not help giving loose to a few indignant remarks on the subject, the cause of his disquietude he said arose from his little boy of 3 years old having heard that if his papa attempted to run away he would be shot: to avoid this danger I recommended his making no such attempt, and informed him that no such orders had been issued by me, that he was now under the charge of the Officer, and that I could not interfere in his arrangements for the security of his prisoner. This groundless accusation is no doubt intended as a Sett-off against the plan

¹ This was probably required by McGillivray for the bedding of his children who were with him, cf. *infra*, p. 112. On the use of moss cf. L. R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord Ouest*, Quebec 1890, vol. 2, p. 322, and F. W. Hodges *Handbook of the Indians of North America, North of Mexico*, Article on Moss-bags.

November laid by himself and Keith to murder Clarke when unlawfully
 1820 detained by Justice Archd. Norman McLeod, for which
 purpose one Beaulieu¹ a Halfbreed and another were specially
 engaged, the former being promised Mr. Clarke's woman²
 [fo. 50] with all his clothes and personal effects, but fortunately the
 Ruffian's possessed better hearts than their blood thirsty
 employers, and after maturely contemplating the enormity of
 the crime they declined it.

24th, Friday: The weather continues very unfavourable,
 blowing hard with drift and snow and intensely cold; the
 people were however under the necessity of starting for the Big
 Island as our provisions are getting low. Directed that the
 upper and lower gates should always be kept locked to prevent
 the risk of the Prisoner escaping, and a door to be opened
 through the Wood yard, which is in future to be the only
 thoroughfare and will render his escape almost impracticable
 as there is generally some person in the yard. Mr. McGilli-
 vray complained that Glasgow³ our Cook was in the habit of
 chastising his children and had this afternoon thrown down
 and kicked his little girl; it appears however that there is no
 ground for the charge; the man happens to be a Negro and the
 children have taken umbrage at his complexion, it being a shade
 darker than their own.

25th, Saturday: The weather has undergone a remarkable
 change since last night, this being an unusually fine day. The
 English Chief arrived, he has been very unfortunate, made no
 hunt and scarcely found subsistence for his Family: he came
 in for a supply of ammunition and says that there is a band of
 N.W. Crees three days march from hence who have a Moose
 'en cache' for us, also some dressed Leather, and the greater
 part would join us if we gave them encouragement: they would
 be of great importance to us as Fort Hunters, but our stores are

¹ Not identified; Simpson's description suggests that he was not a regular
 servant of the N.W.C.

² Cf. *supra*, p. 23, n. 4.

³ Crawford Glasgow, a negro serving as middleman and cook. He joined the
 service of the H.B.C. in 1818 and was in Athabaska from 1818 to 1821, when he
 left the service of the H.B.C. and went to Montreal, August 1821.

now so empty that we have not the means of supplying their wants. November

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Mr. Miles is returned from Harrisons House and brings very satisfactory accounts of the state of the Comys. affairs at that Post: Twenty five Indians have been equipped with great Economy, they are much attached to our interest, and there is every prospect of good returns; several N.W. Indians have joined us and the 'Tripè du Roche' ¹ who was particularly engaged for the purpose of pillaging our Indians has changed sides. Our Opponents have twenty men and twenty five pieces goods at that post, whereas our compliment is only seven men and twelve pieces; I am however in hopes that there will not be such a disparity in the returns. Mr. Andries is much in need of an assistant his Interpreter Mandeville ² having died a few weeks ago. Mr. Miles has fully anticipated my views in regard to fixing Mr. Andries and his Woman for McKenzie's River, he undertakes to establish it next year and she is engaged as an Interpreter; he has secured Fort Hunters and will be prepared to leave this place in the month of July if Mr. Clarke fulfils his promise of reserving a canoe load of goods and provisions for that destination. By Mr. Miles we have received a few skins; he met Mr. Vignau on the track, and brought him back for the purpose of taking a small supply of ammunition and other necessary articles which Mr. Andries absolutely requires.

26th, Sunday: Fine clear weather. Received a supply of fish from the Old Fort; very few taken for some days past at the Big Island. Made up a small Outfit for the N.W. Crees [fo. 51] to be sent by Bouche tomorrow, a few articles also selected for Harrisons House to be forwarded by Mr. Vigneau. Mr. Miles took an Inventory of the Store and I lament to say it is nearly in a state of Bankruptcy. Mr. McGillivray wrote a note

¹ An Indian probably belonging to an Athapaskan tribe. He is not included in the list of Indians equipped and trading at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21.

² François Mandeville, a Canadian engaged by the H.B.C. in 1818 in the capacity of interpreter. Mandeville was stationed at Great Slave Lake in 1818-19 and in the Athabaska district in 1819-20. He died at Fort Wedderburn on 17th October, 1820.

November to Mr. Keith this morning, in which was the following paragraph alluding I suppose to the conversation he had with me on the 23rd Inst. 'I deferred writing you sooner, indeed I had not the courage to hold my Pen. The peace of my family has been disturbed. The intelligence came from one of Shakespeare's harmless men. It is of an atrocious nature, and I can assure you I was not easy in my mind, for had I written to you on the subject of my fears, you would I presume have received another note from the "Contstable"—but "Murder will be out" and a word to the wise is sufficient. You need not write to me on the subject of my alarms, but you will please to give this note a place in your Journal, to refresh my Memory at some future day, and I shall elucidate the matter sooner or later before a higher tribunal than the one we possess at Fort Wedderburne.'¹

The insinuation is so foul, iniquitous and false, that I could not pass it unnoticed, therefore enclosed Mr. McGillivray's Letter in the following note addressed to Mr. Keith:—'Mr. Keith may also note in his Journal, that the Gentlemen of Fort Wedderburne treat the groundless report of Mr. McGillivray's feigned alarms with the contempt it merits. This is the first time that the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy. or any of their representatives have been accused of contemplating the horrible crime of murder: (it is widely different with the N.W. Coy.) any man of common sense will perceive that Mr. McGillivray's sole aim, is calumny of the blackest dye, and that the accusation is fabricated in the mind of one who is accustomed to cool and deliberate plans of assassination.'

27th, Monday: Bouche and the English Chief gone to visit the Crees, Mr. Vignau & Dumaine to Harrisons House, and six sleds to the Old Fort for fish. The mice have damaged a few skins, got them properly arranged and put under the charge of Mr. Chastellain.—Received the following note, vizt.:

¹ The phraseology of McGillivray's note is such that it may have been written according to a code. A code had been used by Colin Robertson during his imprisonment at Fort Chipewyan in 1816, when writing to his friends at Fort Wedderburn.

COAL ISLAND,¹ 27th November, 1820.November
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To MR. SIMPSON.

SIR,

If it is quite convenient and agreeable to you, I beg the favor of you to grant me permission to see Mr. McGillivray, he being in a low state of health.—Your answer will oblige,

Sir, Your mo. hble. Servt.

(signed) WALTER McVICAR.

To which I made the following reply:

‘Mr. Simpson has the satisfaction to inform Mr. McVicar that Mr. McGillivray appears in good health and spirits. Visits are inadmissible.

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 27th Nov., 1820.’

In the evening Mr. McDougald arrived from Berens House for a supply of goods; he brings a Letter from Mr. Greill dated 19th Inst., by which it appears that matters look tolerably well in that quarter. I am by no means satisfied with Mr. Greill’s conduct, he has been very inactive, neglected the Fishery, and more attentive to domestic comforts than public duty. I have determined on sending Mr. McDougald to Harrisons House, and Mr. Vigneau to Beren’s House as the former is better adopted for the heat of opposition and Mr. Andries much requires an active spirited assistant, have therefore sent an Express to recall Mr. Vigneau.—

28th, Tuesday: Fine weather.—Received a supply of fish from the Big Island. The people variously employed about the Fort. In the evening Mr. Vigneau returned with the Express sent after him. I have been busily employed to day and yesterday preparing dispatches for Govr. Williams.

29th, Wednesday: The weather continues fine. People

¹ Also known as Potato Island, an island on the southwest end of Lake Athabaska, in front of Fort Chipewyan, and about three miles off the coast. The island is about two and a half miles long and one mile wide. Fort Wedderburn and the N.W.C. Watch House were on this island.

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November employed as yesterday. St. Picquè brought a note for Mr.
 1820 McGillivray to day; he gave me a hint that it is necessary to
 Watch the prisoner closely, as there is some desperate measure
 in contemplation for his rescue. Wrote the following Letter to
 Mr. Andries, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 29th Nov., 1820.

MR. GEO. PETER ANDRIES, }
 Harrisons House. }

DEAR SIR,

[fo. 52] I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 14th Inst.,
 when it was intended that Mr. Vigneau should join you; Mr.
 Miles has since arrived and the information he brings of your
 prospects is very satisfactory. Mr. McDougald will be more
 useful to you than Mr. Vigneau; I have therefore determined
 on sending him to Harrisons House, and I am confident he will
 be a valuable assistant: I intend him to succeed you at the Post,
 when you proceed to McKenzie's River, you will therefore be
 good enough to introduce him to the Indians, with whom he
 will soon make himself a favourite. Herewith you will receive
 a small supply of the articles you stand most in need of, you
 must nurse them well as our stock here is quite exhausted.
 Let the utmost care be taken of the Provisions, they will be
 much required in Spring. I shall write the Governor fully
 on the affairs of McKenzie's River, and you may depend on
 having a handsome outfit and being well supplied with Officers:
 I have altered Mr. Oxley's destination and you will have
 Gentlemen who must act according to your instructions.
 Beware of your Opponents, they are ready to commit any
 outrage and it is necessary to Watch their motions attentively.
 Mr. McDougald will give you all the Fort Wedderburne
 News.—I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

30th, Thursday: Received the following note from Mr.
 McGillivray, vizt.:

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FORT WEDDERBURNE, 30th Nov., 1820.

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GEO. SIMPSON, ESQ.

SIR

I have this moment received a note from Mr. Keith intimating there are letters lately arrived from Peace River, and some to my address. I have to request that you will have the goodness to inform me in writing whether you will admit of such Letters to be handed to me unopened.

I remain, Sir, Your most Obedt. humble Servt.

(signed) SIMON MCGILLIVRAY, JR.

To which I made the following reply, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 30th November, 1820.

SIMON MCGILLIVRAY, ESQRE.

SIR

I have communicated with the Officer of the subject of your note, and he declines permitting any Letters to pass unopened. I am, Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Finished my dispatches for the Govr. in Chief, in Duplicate of which I annex copies, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURNE, 30th November, 1820.

To WM. WILLIAMS, ESQRE.,

Govr. in Chief of Ruperts Land.

SIR

Altho' we did not conceive it necessary on my departure from the Depot, that I should trouble you with a winter dispatch, I now find that it may be of importance, that you should know exactly the state of affairs in this part of the country, in order to facilitate your arrangements for next year, and for the purpose of enabling you to adopt such measures as your wisdom may suggest for the better regulation of the trade, and for the prevention of a recurrence of those scenes of aggres-

November sion and outrage which, if we are at liberty to judge by recent
 1820 events we have reason to anticipate from our implacable
 Opponents.

I shall therefore do myself the Honor of laying before you a concise statement of the most important circumstances that have taken place in the order they occurred, since my arrival in Athabasca; and in doing so will endeavour as much as possible to divest myself of party feeling, in order that you may have an unprejudiced view of the state of affairs in this quarter, and thereby form such salutary and wholesome arrangements as your better judgement may dictate.

On the 20th Septemr. I arrived here, and found Mr. Brown in charge of the Fort, which had certainly a very desolate appearance, yet in fully as good a state as I had reason to expect; by all accounts he had done wonders in the course of the summer, considering his Slender means, and as the season was too far advanced to think of proceeding towards the Rocky Mountains, I considered it but fair, that he should continue in charge of the District while he remained here; I therefore gave him the offer of it, which he accepted, and he has hitherto conducted the business very much to my satisfaction.

Previous to my arrival the North West had circulated every prejudicial report which their malicious imaginations could invent: the Capture of Mr. Robertson at the Grand Rapid was industriously trumpeted all over the country, as also that of the *Govr. in Chief*, Mr. Clarke and every leading character whose names were familiar to the natives, in short by their account the English were completely extirpated and not a vestige of them would ever be permitted to cross Portage La Loche again: the return of Soucisse and the other prisoners who were taken out last year, gave some appearance of truth to this report, and together with their threats, had the effect of withdrawing some of the Indians from us; many however remain staunch notwithstanding the means taken to debauch them, when sophistical reasoning did not succeed, they had recourse to manual arguments, and Soucisses brutal prowess was called into action, he maltreated and beat many of them in a most inhuman manner and one in particular the 'Carribeau' had his arm fractured by

the blow of a paddle; of which he never can recover the use: my appearance however renovated their confidence, they ventured to emerge from their places of refuge and sought protection in and about the Fort: I very soon ingratiated myself into their favor and in order to counteract the North West aspersions, gave such an exposè of their infamy and poverty, together with our own integrity, weight, and importance, as has materially advanced us in their estimation. Previous to my arrival that consummate villain Soucisse, swaggered about with his sabre and brace of pistols, threatening destruction to all connected with the Hudson's Bay Coy.; Brown daily expected to become the victim of his fury, but was determined to die hard, he put himself in a posture of defence, erected a Bastion at the corner of the Fort, next the North West Watch House, and held out until our arrival when a temporary lull ensued; I found that Black and some of his desperate associates had taken their departure across the Rocky Mountain, that Keith was in charge of Fort Chipewyan and Simon McGillivray three Clerks with Soucisse and their other Bullies were to occupy Blacks quarters at the Watch House. On enquiry into the general state of affairs in the Department I was deeply concerned to learn that from various inexplicable causes the business was left in a most irregular state last season, the Stores empty, the people in a state of mutiny, and a congregation of evils staring in the face those in charge of the Company's affairs: the Indians were discontented, we had not a pound of ammunition to give them, the Fishery for a length of time was unsuccessful, no provisions on hand, in short both our Indians and people were reduced by starvation to a miserable state; our Opponents naturally took the advantage of our misfortunes; they debauched our Indians, gave them ammunition and received nearly all the Provisions they made, and the consequence was that on the arrival of the Brigade it was scarcely possible to divine how they were to proceed to their destinations as their stock of Pemican was quite exhausted on the Voyage hither; we however did make shift to get them away, Geese, Fish, Flour, and the very little dried meat and Grease that was procured were called into requisition and after

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[fo. 53]

November 1820 scraping all the odds and ends together, they were at length dispatched. Much credit is due to the Guides for their indefatigable exertions; the Brigade was by all accounts as indifferently equipped as any that ever entered the North, yet it arrived within one day of the North West and every package was delivered in good condition, some of our little luxuries excepted; the Weather was favorable otherways the consequences might have been serious, as the Canoes were in very bad repair, few Oil Cloths and no gun cases; I was really ashamed to see the miserable slovenly figure we made alongside our Opponents in regard to the appearance of the men, canoes, and cargoes, yet under your active and judicious management I feel confident that a very short time will put us on an equality with them both in the general and particular arrangements of the business. I shall now take the liberty of pointing out an evil which is attended with very serious inconvenience, and I trust will in future be obviated. The Goods for the different posts were last season all packed up higledy pigledy at the Depot, the packages incorrectly marked and numbered, and the contents not corresponding with the Invoices, the consequence was that Mr. Miles had to open every individual package and select the goods *de novo* according to the Indents; this operation detained more than one hundred men here for eight days at a time when there were upwards of two hundred souls, men, women and children about the Fort, the people continually grumbling about their short allowance of provisions, the Indians tormenting us for liquor and their equipments, and the North West emissaries using every means to debauch them, in short the incessant clamour, confusion and uproar occasioned by these concurrent difficulties was truly vexatious, and if it had unfortunately happened that the Brigade had had a tedious Voyage, and that the Winter had set in early, our Canoes could not have got to their destinations with open water; the result would have been a death blow to our prospects in the North: this serious danger might be easily averted by getting the goods carefully packed at York separately according to the Indents in the course of the winter; if delayed until the arrival of the Brigade at the Depot in Spring, irregularity and much loss of

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time must necessarily follow, I therefore earnestly hope that you have already given such instructions as will obviate this evil in future. Circumstances have induced me to make some trifling alteration in your arrangement of the Officers for the different Posts, but which I trust will meet your approbation, and the following statement will show how they have been disposed of, vizt.:

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ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT

Fort Wedderburne	Messrs. Brown, Miles, Oxley, Chas-		
	tellain, Clouston, O'Doherty	-	& 44 men
Berens House	- Messrs. Greill & McDougald	-	& 6 „
Harrisons House	- Messrs. Andries & Vignau	-	& 7 „

GREAT SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT

Fort Resolution	- Messrs. McVicar & McAulay	-	& 17 „
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PEACE RIVER DISTRICT

Fort St. Marys	- Messrs. Finlayson, Thomas, Bourassa		
	& Roy	- - - -	& 21 „
Colville House	- Messrs. Laronde & McBean	-	& 10 „
Fort de Pinnette	- Messrs. Yale & Giasson	-	& 10 „

Exclusive of Guides, Interpreters & Iroquois	-	115 men
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ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT.—Our prospects here I have the satisfaction to inform you, are as flattering as I had reason to anticipate, and if no unforeseen misfortune occurs, I think our returns will considerably surpass any former year: I found our Indians buoyed up with most extravagant notions and took much pains to undeceive them, they did expect a renewal of those scenes of extravagance which have hitherto characte[r]-ized our intercourse amongst them, yet by reasoning with them they reluctantly subscribed to my Œconomical plans. Upon examining [*sic*] the books I found they were loaded with debts which it was impossible they could ever liquidate, I therefore made a merit of necessity, and with a show of extraordinary generosity remitted one half; this appears to have had the

November effect of animating their exertions, they were satisfied with one
 1820 half the advances usually made, and went to their hunting grounds highly pleased and seemingly determined on renewing their industrious habits: I have paid them a great deal of personal attention, exhibited my finery, got the Interpreters to pass me off as a most extraordinary personage and by this time my fame has reached from one end of Athabasca to the other: I have studied their character with some attention and find them to be a miserable abject race; covetous and selfish to an extreme, full of low cunning, and devoid of every good and generous feeling; their boasted gratitude, sentiments of honor and attachment are all counterfeit, and had they but courage a price would reconcile them to the blackest acts:—they know the full value of the opposition, profit thereby, and while it continues little good can be expected of them, but if ruled with a rod of iron they would in a very few years repay the heavy sacrifices made.

Mr. Clarke's fame has got wind, his generosity is proverbial, and I understand that a great proportion of the Athabasca Lake Indians have gone to Isle ala Crosse: it is high time that his extravagant system should be checked, and I fear the lavish course he has adopted will bring him more Indians than furs: instead of attracting them by an enormous waste of property in large bands to any particular spot, I think it would be found more advantageous in point of returns to encourage them to extend themselves over a large track of country: it will however require more logic than either you or I possess to make Mr. Clarke a convert to this doctrine; by all accounts popularity is the object to which his sole attention is directed, the cost gives him little consideration and unless you circumscribe his means, I fear he will indulge this unfortunate hobby. Our
 [fo. 54] opponents appear desirous to curtail their expenses, and if we did generally follow their example, the good effects would soon be experienced. At this post we have equipped about thirty Indians,¹ with one half less goods than at any former period, and when we calculate on twenty five packs I trust I am not

¹ According to the list in Brown's Report on Lake Athabasca district, 37 Indians were equipped at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21.

over sanguine in my expectations. Our Opponents I understand have about the same number of Indians. You are no doubt aware of our disasters last year at Pierre au Calumit; on my arrival here I understood that most of the Crees, had migrated from thence to Lesser Slave Lake, and that the North West had got those remaining under their controul; I was therefore apprehensive that we had no prospect of obtaining a footing there, and had nearly resolved on not attempting to re-establish that Post; but finding it to be of the utmost importance to have an Officer and a few men there to watch the N.W. and protect our own Indians as they passed through that track in the course of the winter and if possible to secure a few provisions, I dispatched Messrs. Greill & McDougald for that purpose, and have great pleasure in saying that they have succeeded beyond my hopes; they have debauched from our Opponents about one half the Crees (Twelve in number) have secured some provisions and discovered a good Fishery within two and a half days' march of the Fort so that there is no danger of starvation: the North West had no idea that we meant to establish this place, and therefore have no post opposed to us: on a moderate calculation I estimate the returns of this Post at four packs Furs and a considerable quantity of Provisions. Mr. McAulay's misfortunes last year at this place are ascribed to the sickness among the Indians; the pains taken by the North West to debauch his Hunters, and the fishery being entirely neglected, so that himself and people were reduced to all the miseries of famine: his generous competitor Mr. Stuart (A North West Proprietor) took the advantage of his sufferings and dictated the most humiliating terms:¹ he sold him a few provisions to maintain himself and people on their three days Journey to Fort Wedderburne at the enormous price stipulated in Article 3rd of the Agreement and retained all his Goods and Furs as a pledge that the Hudsons Bay Coy. would not Trade with the Crees previous to the 1st September, 1820, also that neither McAulay nor the men along with him were at liberty to act for the Hudsons Bay Co. previous to the 1st June, 1820.

¹ Cf. *supra* pp. 46-47. For Simpson's correspondence with the Agent of the N.W.C. respecting this incident cf. *infra* pp. 320-21 *et seq.*

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November Conformable to this arrangement (which nothing short of the
 1820 immediate fear of Death, or insanity, could justify on the part of Mr. McAulay) the Hudsons Bay Co. did not Trade with the Crees within the period stipulated; but it was utterly impossible to comply with the other condition as Mr. McDonald had not sufficient Provisions to maintain the people idle about the Fort; they were therefore employed as circumstances required, and on this ground the N.W. Coy. think proper to detain our property to the amount of 3 to 400£. This infamous transaction certainly cannot hold good in any Court of Law or equity, and as the remedy may be nearly as bad as the disease if brought before a Canadian Jury, I see no good reason why we should not repay ourselves. Herewith I take the liberty of handing you copies of all the documents connected with it, in order that you may determine on the line of conduct to be pursued:—Five good Packs of McKenzie River Beaver deliverable at the Grand Rapid Portage would about indemnify us.

Mr. Andries made such an injudicious use of the property entrusted to his charge last year, together with our inability to indulge his extravagant habits, that I found it necessary to reduce his Indent considerably, and have given him particular instructions as to the system he must this winter adopt, and as Mr. Miles's presence might act as a check upon him, I sent that Gentleman to assist in fitting out the Indians, who is just returned and informs me, that matters look well at Harrisons House; they have made a very material reduction in the Credits, and with fewer goods have equipped more Indians than last year, who promised to exert themselves this season. The North West are unusually strong at that Post, and it appears singular that they have encouraged a great proportion of their Indians to hunt in that direction: I am at a loss to conjecture, what object they can have in view by so doing, as on the contrary, I should have supposed, that they would rather be anxious to withdraw them from the vicinity of their own barren lands, where they maintain themselves with little exertion on the Carriboo and neglect the more valuable animals, which are very rare in that part of the country: Andries has debauched some of their best Indians, and I think he will make a profit on

his post. Mr. Miles computes the probable returns of Harri- November
sons House this year at about six packs. 1820

By the moderate and inoffensive line of conduct I had resolved to pursue on my entrance into the Indian country; I did expect to have escaped the malignant persecutions of the North West Coy., but I had not seated myself in Fort Wedderburne, when I discovered the fallacy of such visionary hopes, they threw open the gates of Janus before I had time to exhibit my pacific disposition: from various sources I was informed that Mr. Keith had promulgated to the Indians his intention of chaining me in the Privy of Fort Chipewyan during the Winter, and Mr. Simon McGillivray on his arrival assailed me with similar threats which were re-echoed by Soucisse the Generalissimo of their Bullies; these Blackguard menaces I treated with the silent contempt they merited, being most anxious to avoid any altercation with them; their Half breeds were sent into our Hall for the purpose of enticing our Indians away, and every attempt made to provoke me to say or do something which they could lay hold of as a pretext for commencing hostilities, which for some time had not the desired effect; at length however an opportunity presented itself of unveiling their inimical intentions, which they embraced with extraordinary avidity. You are aware that their Watch House is within about twelve yards of our Stockades, this building projects about five yards towards the Lake beyond the front of our Fort, and commands a view of our gate and communication with the Water; it was a great nuisance and annoyance, and enabled them to indulge their impertinent curiosity from their back windows without having the trouble of crossing their threshold: in order to rid ourselves of this eyesore, I directed our people to run a few Stockades from the corner of our Bastion within our boundary line to the face of the bank, and while Mr. Oxley was superintending the work on the 19th Ultimo, Mr. McGillivray in a peremptory tone ordered him to desist: on being informed of this I stepped out and directed the workmen to proceed, when Mr. McGillivray again made his appearance joined by Soucisse and a few other desperate characters, each armed with a dagger and brace of Pistols,

November when I coolly informed Mr. McGillivray that the hostile
 1820 appearance of himself and people would not deter me from
 accomplishing my object, that I had no intention of encroaching
 on the boundary line which he acknowledged was about five
 yards beyond the line in which we were erecting the Pickets;
 at the same time gave him to understand that altho' I was
 anxious to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings with the
 North West Coy., I should on all occasions maintain with firm-
 ness and determination the rights and interests of the Honble.
 Hudsons Bay Coy.: seeing that I was not to be easily intimi-
 dated he and his colleagues withdrew and were graciously
 pleased to permit us to erect our Stockades on our own ground.
 This gust being over we were allowed to remain tranquil until
 Sunday the 22nd when we were alarmed while sitting at dinner,
 by the sudden appearance of James Taylor one of our men,
 [fo. 55] bursting into the Hall with pain and terror depicted in his
 countenance; on enquiring into the cause it appeared that
 while passing by the North West House a few minutes pre-
 vious, with a load of firewood on his shoulder, he was accosted
 by one Linton a Clerk and asked if he knew that he had com-
 mitted a trespass, by walking within about ten yards of their
 buildings; before he had time to reply one Wilburner a N.W.
 half bully half Clerk, without further ceremony knocked him
 down, beat and kicked him in a most inhuman manner and left
 him insensible on the ground; the poor fellow was so much
 bruised that he could not even attempt to retaliate, however
 when he came to his senses, he contrived to make his escape,
 leaving his cap and firewood as a trophy of Victory in the hands
 of his brutal assailant. An unprovoked outrage of this kind,
 certainly required an immediate explanation, I therefore sent
 Lamallice to enquire into the cause, who was informed by Mr.
 McGillivray that Taylor's statement was correct, and did not
 choose to make any further acknowledgement; Lamallice was
 permitted to bring the Man's Cap, but the firewood remained;
 I therefore directed the man to return for his load, accompanied
 by one of our people armed, & put the Gentlemen in a state of
 defence, to protect the men in case they were attacked; they
 however did not venture to repeat the assault, the men carried

their wood away, and when they returned to us within our Pickets, the man who accompanied Taylor thoughtlessly discharged his Pistol into the Lake for the purpose of unloading it; Mr. McGillivray on hearing the report, asked If I had permitted our people to behave so riotously; I immediately explained the circumstance of the Pistol being fired off, and enquired if it was by his authority that his Bully had so wantonly assaulted Taylor, he admitted that it was and justified the man's conduct on the ground that Taylor had been cautioned not to pass so near their Houses, I then intimated that it was my intention to protect the Compys. Servants, and begged that he would restrain the violence of his Desperadoes, otherways I should be under the disagreeable necessity of resorting to means of defence equally violent; here the matter rested for that night. Early the following morning (say the 23rd Oct.) Mr. Brown came into my room and informed me that the North West were digging the foundation of a Bastion within two feet of ours and about three feet within the mark that Mr. McGillivray acknowledged to be the boundary line between the North West and Hudsons Bay establishments: I did not choose to submit tamely to this encroachment and requested Mr. Brown would caution the North West people not to build on our ground, Mr. McGillivray however informed him that he should proceed, as he now recollected that the boundary line was within the Stockades of our Fort: Upon making the necessary enquiry at some of the people who had been here when the Fort was erected, I found that the line acknowledged by himself on the 19th was the correct one, I therefore determined on resisting the encroachment by force if necessary, and accordingly got some of the Gentlemen and people under arms, and was about to proceed to the spot when Mr. Grignon the Montreal Contstable arrived after an absence of eight days: on learning the circumstances of the case, he informed me that he had a warrant against Mr. Simon McGillivray, and would arrest him on my rendering the necessary assistance, which he would require in the King's name; I told him (in the presence of several people and through Messrs. Chastellain, Clouston, Brown & Oxley as Interpreters and Witnesses in order to

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November avoid misunderstanding) that it was my province to defend the
 1820 Company's Rights, but that I could not interfere or give any instructions as to the line of conduct he might in his legal capacity find it necessary to adopt, at the same time informed him that if our people were legally called upon to assist him in the execution of his Official duty they had no alternative.

I then proceeded to the spot where the North West Workmen were employed attended by several of our people stationed in such situations as to defend me in the event of my being attacked; on my approach Mr. McGillivray came out, and I addressed him: 'Mr. McGillivray I should be glad to have some further explanation with you on the subject of this boundary line,' he was about to reply, when Mr. Grignon came up and collaring him said: 'I arrest you in the Kings name,' he resisted and Mr. Grignon called on Bouche & Latondre¹ two of our people to assist him in the Kings name, who immediately laid hold of and conveyed him into Fort Wedderburne; his party cocked their pistols, but seeing us prepared they withdrew in confusion and the villain Soucisse took refuge in the woods. On my return into the Fort, I found Mr. McGillivray venting his spleen in a torrent of abuse; he invighed against me with much warmth, declared that the arrest was illegal and that he would have warrants against the whole party without loss of time. I replied that the Officer had acted on his own responsibility, and could alone be liable for the consequences. Mr. Keith the same day wrote me a threatening Letter protesting against the illegality of the measure and demanding his immediate release; my correspondence with that Gentleman has been very laconic, a copy of which I enclose you together with copies of all the communications that have passed between him and Mr. McGillivray. The Contstable demanded accomodation for the Prisoner, which I complied with as a matter of course, he is treated with every mark of attention and lives upon the best we can afford; he has the range of Fort Wedderburne upon his parole of Honor, and a confidential servant to wait upon him, his Woman

¹ André Latondre, a Canadian bowsman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1820.

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and two children live with him and are as comfortable as we have the means of making them. I have my private doubts as to the Legality of the Instrument on which he is apprehended (a copy thereof is enclosed) but we are exculpated as the Officer acted on his own responsibility and is alone liable for the consequences. Mr. McGillivray declares it is intended for Simon McGillivray Senr. the Agent,¹ had it been for that Gentleman the Warrant no doubt would have designated him 'of London' but you will observe that it merely describes him 'Simon McGillivray late of the said Parish of Montreal Mercht.' The man we now have is well known to you by name and character, he has been a leading actor in every nefarious transaction that has taken place in the country, he it was that arrested Clarke so repeatedly, stole our pieces, arrested and attempted to drown Robertson, was a Halfbreed Leader at the Red River, raised the Halfbreeds for the avowed purpose of massacring you at the Grand Rapid last season, and had he [h]is liberty I have every reason to believe that he would have been the author of some Tragic scenes this Winter in Athabasca; he was admirably calculated to fill the place of his black Hearted predecessor: Black: Had Mr. Grignon not arrested him, 'tis more than probable that I should have got him secured as a measure of Self defence as I have no hesitation in saying that his conduct gave me so much uneasiness that I conceive a Court of Law would have justified the step, had it been adopted. Coltman's Warrant for the illegal arrest of Robertson still hangs over his head; Spence the Contstable² had the original in his possession when taken at the Grand Rapid this season, and we have a copy of it certified by Dr. Todd & Mr. Miles, but I do not conceive that it is a Legal instrument of arrest.

A few days after his arrest, he requested to be admitted to Bail and offered his personal property and Mr. Keith's bond as security that he would appear at Montreal in Septemr.; which the Officer would not accept of, I however in order to

¹ Cf. Appendix B.

² George Spence was a servant of the H.B.C. who had been made a constable for this occasion.

November hear what he would say told him that if he lodged Thirty pieces
 1820 Goods in my hands (the same quantity that Clarke deposited
 in the hands of the mock Justice McLeod) I would offer myself
 as his security to the Officer, but he declined entering into this
 arrangement alledging that he had no controul over the North
 West property as he was no Partner altho' understood to be
 one. I must say that I feel much satisfaction in having this
 Gentleman within our Stockades, he would have been a
 [fo. 56] troublesome thorn in our sides during the winter; and his
 present residence will convince the Indians, that we are not
 quite so insignificant as our Friends at Fort Chipewyan have
 represented us. The North West will no doubt exert them-
 selves to get Warrants against us without delay, it may therefore
 be well to give Mr. Gale a memorandum of these particulars
 in order that he may know the exact state of the case and act
 accordingly in our behalf.

Mr. McGillivray appears, at least pretends by his corre-
 spondence to be in a delicate state of health, otherwise the
 Officer would have taken him to some post of greater security,
 but as a Winter Journey might injure his constitution, it may
 be better to keep him until the Spring, when Mr. Grignon will
 take him out in a half loaded Canoe; if Mr. Clarke or the
 Gentn. in charge of Nelson House can provide a Guide, I
 think he should be sent by the burnt wood carrying place and
 Split Lake Track from Portage Fort du Trait.

Since Mr. McGillivray's confinement the North West have
 erected a strong Bastion on their own ground which covers
 ours, protects their communication with the Lake, and from
 the Upper story commands a view of our Fort: in order that
 we may have a corresponding strong hold, I have erected a
 Bastion on the Rock behind our House which overlooks their
 square of buildings and renders our Fort impregnable from all
 quarters if properly watched, this Bastion with the Gentlemen
 now about me and a few Highlanders would secure Fort
 Wedderburne against any force the North West could bring
 against us: I do apprehend they will attempt some 'ruse de
 Guerre' in the course of the Winter and therefore keep a good
 look out, an Officer and three men with fixed Bayonets and

loaded Musquets stand sentry every night. Keith has sent November
messengers in all directions with the intelligence and I expect 1820
he will soon have a considerable force here, but if they attempt
to take our Fisheries or Fort, or commit any violence which
we may be unable to resent I trust you will have a rod in pickle
for them in Spring; we can give both the Gentlemen and their
Packs a passage to England in the Prince of Wales.¹

PEACE RIVER.—I have Letters from St. Marys up to the
20th, and from Colville House to the 29th Ultimo; the canoes
had arrived in safety, and at those dates every thing looked well,
but the writers are not so full and explanatory as I could have
wished. I have pinched Gt. Slave Lake and this District in
order to give Peace River a fair chance, and Mr. Finlayson
informs me that he has equiped his Indians Economically and
sent them away satisfied, this is a grand point. Mr. Thomas
had done little good there in the course of the summer, indeed
he had not the means, but Mr. Finlayson seems to have no fear
of starvation; he has secured Baptiste Bisson and several good
Fort Hunters, also Twenty bags Pemican and some dried
Provisions from a Freeman, and the promise of Twenty bags
more in Spring. The North West have established a Post
close to St. Marys which will no doubt annoy him a little. I
have no data to form an opinion by as to the probable returns
of St. Marys, but if it is possible to do any good there, I think
it will be done as Finlayson is considered a man of some ability,
and particularly zealous and interested.

I have continued Mr. Laronde in charge of Colville House
instead of giving it to Mr. Thomas as was intended; my reasons
for so doing were, that he is considered the better trader, more
Economical, active and industrious and a greater favourite
with the Natives: he has already secured four packs Furs and
a quantity of provisions, whereas the other Gentleman has done

¹ This ship was built for the H.B.C. by Messrs. Randall & Brent in 1793.
Her maiden voyage took place in 1793 and her last one in the service of the H.B.C.
in 1841. In 1842 she was advertised for sale and was purchased in 1844 by
John Chambers of Hull for £1355 1s. 4d. The *Prince of Wales* was used for
communications between England and Hudson Bay. Franklin's first polar
expedition left England on her in 1819.

November next to nothing, moreover as Mr. Finlayson is a stranger in the
 1820 Country I think Mr. Thomas will be a useful assistant to him, at least he assures me of that in a Letter I have received from him: these reasons I hope will be satisfactory. Mr. Laronde being an indifferent penman I have given him Mr. McBean as an assistant, who will keep the store and his accounts, also watch his motions. Mr. Laronde has Equiped Twelve Hunters and some Boys at a moderate Expense who he thinks will make fair returns and if he gives Ten packs I shall be satisfied. He has established a Fall Fishery at Loon Lake two days march from the House and will save what provisions he can. Two of the Hay's River Indians were at his Post and informed him that we were expected to have established a Post there this season, and that the Indians had a quantity of Furs and provisions there waiting our arrival. Hays River is but five days march from Colville House, and Mr. Laronde intended sending to them by the first Ice in order to secure whatever they have. The No. West have also established a Post close to Colville House so that they seem determined to oppose us at all points.

Mr. Yale with ten men and the Iroquois are gone to establish Fort de Pinnette, but I cannot even venture an opinion as to their prospects; the Free Iroquois in that quarter have been anxious for our appearance amongst them, and I trust will give him a good reception; if he makes out in the way of living, he will no doubt have his share of the Furs.

I am most anxious about Giasson and his party who went across the Mountain, when Finlayson wrote he had no accounts of them, and we have merely had a vague rumour that they were destroyed by the Natives: if any accident has happened them, the North West are at the bottom of it, and in my opinion the miscreant Black, has been the prime Agent; he with Durocher and several other desperate characters took their departure from hence for that destination about the 10th of June, and what strengthens my suspicion that some foul play was in contemplation is, that McGillivray (without alluding to our intention of establishing that country) has taken much pains to persuade me that the Natives are very hostile and treacher-

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ous. God forbid that there should be any solid grounds for alarm, but I really do apprehend that something very serious has taken place. It is possible that he and his party may be at Fort de Pinnette with the free Iroquois waiting the arrival of our people, if so all is well and we may expect some returns, but the Iroquois Guides and Interpreters that were to have conducted and introduced us to the Natives, have positively declared that they will not renew their engagements unless Giasson returns safe, so that if he does not make his appearance, it will be quite impracticable to establish the country next year; on the contrary however if he returns they will accompany him and in the absence of accurate information as to the country and it's resources I must advance my ideas on the subject of this establishment with great diffidence. We may calculate on a very strong opposition and therefore it will be necessary to act with great caution and be prepared for the worst; the North West will no doubt use every exertion to incite the Indians against us, and if that fails, they will have such an host of Outlaws and desperate Blackguards of all descriptions who are capable of the most atrocious deeds that it will be requisite to enter the country in a formidable shape in order to keep them at Bay. I highly approve of your choice of Mr. Brown as a Leader of the party, he is intelligent, active, zealous, and brave, but I suspect they have a Warrant against him,¹ and as it is more than probable that he may be taken, before he gets to his destination, it will be highly proper that some confidential Officer should accompany him, who could manage the business in the event of such a misfortune happening. I have it therefore in contemplation to start him from St. Marys with two Canoes and the few goods we can spare, about the middle of June, accompanied by Messrs. Oxley, Giasson & Greill; the former Gentleman to take charge in Mr. Brown's absence for which with the assistance of Mr. Giasson he is sufficiently qualified; the party to proceed direct to Trout River² about

¹ Brown had spent the summer of 1820 inland with impunity, but it is possible that the N.W.C. had by now got a warrant against him.

² A river of British Columbia, flowing south into Peace River after a course of about 300 miles.

November half way in the Mountain, five days march beyond Finlay's
 1820 branch,¹ there to establish a Post; Messrs. Brown, Giasson &
 Greill to proceed from thence (leaving Mr. Oxley in charge)
 [fo. 57] beyond the height of land, which with Canoes occupies about
 twenty days and establish another Post in a branch of the
 Columbia River (name unknown) where they will secure
 Salmon for their Winters maintenance and after making the
 necessary arrangements there, leave Mr. Greill in charge,
 Messrs. Brown & Giasson returning to Trout River by an
 overland track of three days march, and there wait the arrival
 of the four Canoes expected to arrive from Norway House
 about the middle of August. Mr. McBean will take his
 passage in the canoes from hence, and Messrs. Oxley & Mc-
 Bean manage one Post, and Messrs. Greill & Giasson the other;
 Mr. Brown to superintend both, and as the distance overland
 is so trifling, he can divide his time between them as circum-
 stances may require. I do not think we can attempt to estab-
 lish more than these two posts the first year; Lamallice the
 Guide has wintered at both places, knows the Country well, and
 thinks we have no danger to apprehend either from the Natives
 or on the score of living. In the event of Giasson and his party
 not making their appearance before Spring, we may rest
 satisfied that they have fallen a sacrifice to the Vindictive
 machinations of our blood thirsty opponents, and the Laws of
 nature, as also those of our country would in my opinion justify
 our taking prompt measures of redress, and nothing could so
 effectually put a stop to their villainous career as taking their
 whole Northern Brigade down to York; this hint is for your
 consideration, and if you are inclined to carry it into effect, it
 may be done with little difficulty. I shall undertake to lead
 twenty Officers and Men that can be depended upon from this
 side of Portage La Loche independent of Canadians; a few of
 the Churchill Officers and men would no doubt also Volunteer;
 Mr. Clarke and his Gentlemen would be important auxiliaries,
 Heron and his Highlanders ² are men of true courage and York

¹ A river about thirty miles long, in British Columbia, connecting Parsnip River with McLeod Lake.

² The settlers at Red River were predominantly of Scottish origin.

and the Winipic could produce some valuable Partisan's;—a November
 Leader is all that is required, if you would undertake that 1820
 important duty all difficulty is at an end, on the contrary if you
 have any delicacy on that head on account of your Official
 situation I shall gladly Volunteer my poor abilities. Portage
 Fort du Trait is in my opinion the point at which the blow
 should be struck and if Guides are provided, the Split Lake
 and Port Nelson River track, would be the safest and most
 expeditious. If you could provide maintenance for our own
 people, the Pemican which the North West take from Isle ala
 Crosse for the voyage to Cumberland would on a pinch serve
 to York; the Waters of Portage Fort du Trait abound with
 fine Sturgeon, and a few weeks short allowance for ourselves is
 nothing in a case of emergency.

I had some communication with Mr. Andries on the subject
 of establishing the Grand River, and difficulty in bringing him
 to terms, he at length agrees to undertake this important
 mission next season: it is his intention to establish three Posts
 in the fall; one at the Forks of Rivierre aux l'ior, another in the
 Rocky Mountain River, and the third at Bears Lake;¹ he
 proceeds from hence in Spring and settles Bears Lake, and then
 returns to the Forks of Rivierre aux l'ior, to wait the arrival of
 the Canoes in the Fall and from thence send a confidential
 Officer to the Rocky Mountain River; at the first there is
 considerable danger of starvation, and if he and the Officer at
 the Rocky Mountain River, find their Hunters cannot main-
 tain them, they will retire to Bears Lake which is a good Fish
 post: he seems to be making his arrangements with judgement
 and precaution, and I have not the least doubt but he will do
 well: he will require three Officers, one, an active intelligent
 fellow to take charge in case any misfortune happens to himself.
 I am under some degree of apprehension that the North West
 may lay hold of him on some frivolous pretence; you know
 they have a claim on him as he left their service before the

¹ Cf. p. 33, *supra*. This scheme was not effected at the date intended by
 Simpson because of the union between the H.B.C. and the N.W.C., after which
 the N.W.C. posts on the Mackenzie River were taken over by the H.B.C. As
 for Andries, he remained in the Athabaska district after the union.

November expiration of his contract. Mr. Clarke did promise faithfully
 1820 in the fall to let me have a Canoe load of Goods from Isle ala Crosse for the purpose of establishing McKenzie's River in Spring, if he disappoints us it will be quite impossible to proceed until the arrival of the Canoes in the Fall, which may be attended with serious inconvenience. The existence of the McKenzie River party in a great measure depends on their Nets; we have no twine here, and if he waits the arrival of the Canoes in the Fall, it will be too late to make the number required, therefore it is absolutely necessary that Fifteen nets should be made below according to the Pattern herewith sent, say 45 fathoms in length, 26 meshes deep of $3\frac{7}{8}$ inch, also ten Nets of 75 fathoms in length 15 meshes deep of 5 Inch. The quantity of Flour and Luxuries required by Andries is more than his allowance, but he must have it in full, it was a very particular clause in our agreement, and his Wife on whom we depend in a great measure as an Interpreter will not go in unless it is complied with. He has debauched some of the North West Hunters who are willing to follow him to the pole if necessary.

The New Caladonia & McKenzie's River expeditions you will observe require nine valuable Officers, it will therefore be absolutely necessary that you furnish that number next season; five of them men of some experience who have two or three years to serve, and the other four young active men of moderate notions and expectations, who have four or five years to serve. We are sadly in want of runners all over the Country; the fellows we have now got are really so consequential and insolent that no good can be got out of them; a few attached English Halfbreeds would therefore be of the utmost importance to us. Pisque¹ at Isle ala Crosse and Tait² at Cumberland would be very useful men. Clouston the Blacksmith who is really a valuable man, I believe returns to the low Country in Spring,

¹ A H.B.C. servant stationed at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1820-1 and not identified. His name appears in neither the contemporary accounts of the Northern Department nor in the Ile-à-la-Crosse journals.

² John Tait born in Caithness in 1777, engaged by the H.B.C. in 1798 and serving as a blacksmith. Tait in 1818-21 was at Cumberland House.

he will be a great loss to us, it is therefore absolutely necessary that a man is sent in to fill his place next season; a Blacksmith is also required for St. Marys and I trust you will be able to provide both. If a few Highlanders could be sent in they would be of infinite service, a stout Englishman even without science in the Boxiani ¹ is an object of terror to the Canadian Bullies: and the Meurons ² are such Fire Eaters that a Frenchman does not choose to insult him, half a dozen of these lads would therefore be very desirable. Nearly all our Orkney Fishermen, have given notice that they go out in Spring, ten or twelve are therefore much wanted. I did intend to have Built two Boats here this season, but we have neither carpenters nor iron, therefore it is impracticable, every old Hatchet in the Fort is wrought down already.

November
1820

Boats would be of essential benefit here, they can with ease be sent to Portage La Loche, McKenzie's River, and the foot of the Mountain, if you could therefore provide a Boat Carpenter he would be a valuable servant.

I earnestly hope your Order for One hundred men from Canada will be complied with as our people do not seem inclined to engage until they get to the Depot, where they calculate on another advance; those who do go out upon that expectation should be sent to Montreal if their services can be dispensed with. If we had a sufficient quantity of Rum this season $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of their Wages would be expended, but at this moment there are not ten Gallons in the Store. The Depot will I trust be furnished with abundance of trifles to suit their palates and fancies and lighten their pockets, it is really galling to be under the necessity of giving them Dfts. on Montreal for such heavy amounts as some of their balances come to.

The road in Portage La Loche will require but trifling repairs, three men can in two months put it in good condition, and with the assistance of Horses and Carts two boats of Sixty pieces each and Crews of seven men each will transport Boats and Cargoes in one Week. It would be superfluous to trouble you again on the subject of Canoes and Pemican from the [fo. 58]

¹ Boxing.

² Cf. p. 71, n 1.

November
1820

Saskatchewan, there will no doubt be an abundant supply of both.

We had not accomodation for Mr. O'Doherty & Cochrane in our Brigade, I therefore sent them to Isle ala Crosse by Mr. Clarke's boats, also a Canoe load of goods which must have been otherwise left at Norway House. On my departure from Isle ala Crosse it was arranged with Mr. Clarke that I should send a Canoe from the Lake for these goods and passengers and I accordingly forwarded it and six men from hence for that purpose on the 22nd Septmr., the Voyage to and from Isle ala Crosse would occupy twenty five days at the utmost, but we have as yet had no accounts of them; the Rivers & Lakes were open until the 10th of November, so that they are no less than forty four days out of time, and I fear some unfortunate accident has happened to them; the absence of the men and passengers has put us to the most serious inconvenience and the want of the goods is really attended with a loss that I cannot now sufficiently estimate. I should be sorry to accuse Mr. Clarke on slight grounds, but I have cogent reasons to suspect that he has detained the Canoe and goods at Isle ala Crosse for the purpose of embarrassing this Department,¹ if it turns out that my suspicion is correct, I trust you will see the propriety of instituting a particular enquiry into the subject: the loss and inconvenience will be attended with the most serious consequences to the Trade of the District, as the hauling of those goods in the course of the Winter will calculating the services of our people at their extravagant Wages amount to £300 Sterling, we moreover run the risk of losing all our Indians as the North West Stores are full,² whereas ours are entirely empty: this matter requires minute investigation, and unless the Gentleman in charge of Isle ala Crosse does not render every assistance in his power to the Athabasca Department in it's present helpless state, it is quite impossible to expect returns from this side of Portage La Loche.

¹ On this canoe, cf. *infra*, pp. 170, 172, 204, 231, 248, 276, 301, Cochran and O'Dougherty who were expected with it arrived separately on January 27th and February 21st. Cf. *infra*, pp. 248 and 276.

² Actually, they were in the same state as the H.B.C.'s. Cf. *supra*, pp. 89, 102.

Herewith I send you a copy of the Indent for next season November
which I trust will be complied with, and Mr. Miles will take 1820
the liberty of handing you a few remarks thereon.

GREAT SLAVE LAKE.—I have as yet received no communication from this District; in the month of July Mr. McVicar was doing well, he had the greater proportion of the Indians and I think will make good returns. He talks of going home next season, and in that case, I must give Mr. McAulay the charge if he re-engages; he is at present with Mr. McVicar and I hope in charge of a small Post at Stoney Island for the purpose of intercepting the North West Indians. The contracts of both these Gentlemen expire in Spring and if they hold out for an advance of Salary it must be given as there will be a great dearth of experienced Officers for next year.

I have some idea of visiting Peace River in the course of February for the purpose of making some necessary arrangements there, but if we are likely to be in hot water here I shall send Mr. Miles.

I shall expect to have the pleasure of hearing from you previous to my departure from hence if any thing is to be done at Portage Fort du Trait; if not it is probable that I may overtake you at Cumberland as I intend leaving this place by the first open water.

The privations incident to the country are now familiar to me, all my superfluous Beef is vanished, we have at times abundance of Fish, at others a very short allowance, as yet we have not seen animal food.

I have the Honor to be with much respect

Sir

Your mo Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO: SIMPSON.

P.S.—Since writing the foregoing I have received private information from one of the N.W. Bullies, that it will be necessary to watch the prisoner closely, as there is some desperate measure in contemplation for his rescue. If the Gentlemen intended for this Department could take their passage in the boats, it would be a great relief to the Brigade.

G. S.

COPY OF OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPT. 1821

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT

1821 AND 1822

[fo. 59]

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22		PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
		Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Augers $\frac{1}{2}$ Inch	No. .	"	"	"	"
$\frac{3}{4}$ "	" .	"	"	"	"
1 "	" .	"	"	"	"
$1\frac{1}{4}$ "	" .	"	"	"	"
Adze	" .	"	"	"	"
Anvils	" .	"	1	"	1
Aqua fortis	qt. .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
Awls Indian	doz. .	12	24	10	46
Baize green	yd. .	4	12	4	20
Bellows	No. .	"	1	"	1
Basins pint earthen	" .	4	8	4	16
Bayonets large	" .	15	25	12	52
Bayonets small	" .	18	30	12	60
Beads agate	bun .	6	6	6	18
white common	lbs .	"	"	"	"
Lt. blue common	" .	"	"	"	"
assorted colors common	" .	8	12	3	23
china	bun. .	8	30	6	44
white enamel	lbs .	2	3	1	6
Bells p Hawks	p .	100	200	100	400
" Dogs	doz .	2	4	2	8
" Horses	" .	"	"	"	"
Belts Canadian No. 1	No. .	12	20	6	38
" 2	" .	12	20	6	38
" 3	" .	12	15	6	33
" 4	" .	12	15	6	33
& roses	" .	"	"	"	"
Blankets striped	" .	4	8	3	15
$3\frac{1}{2}$ Point ¹	p .	6	6	1	13
3 "	" .	14	15	15	44
$2\frac{1}{2}$ "	" .	12	15	12	39
2 "	" .	6	15	6	27
$1\frac{1}{2}$ "	" .	6	15	6	27
1 "	" .	6	15	6	27

¹ For footnotes on pages 142-169, see pages 168-9.

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	1	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	2	2	2	2	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	2	2	2	2	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	1	
"	"	"	"	"	"	1	1	2	2	2	
" $\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	" $\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
30	8	6	"	44	18	10	10	38	24	24	
12	"	"	"	12	12	"	"	12	6	12	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
12	3	3	"	18	6	4	4	14	12	12	
24	12	12	"	48	12	6	12	30	24	36	
30	18	12	"	60	24	12	18	54	72	36	
6	"	"	"	6	6	"	"	6	4	6	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	10	16	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	90	"	
18	6	4	"	28	12	6	6	24	15	10	
40	"	"	"	40	10	"	"	10	10	10	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	4	3	
200	"	100	"	300	200	"	"	200	100	100	
6	2	"	"	8	6	2	2	10	2	6	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	4	
30	12	6	"	48	12	3	6	21	24	36	
30	12	6	"	48	12	3	6	21	6	6	
24	6	6	"	36	12	3	6	21	6	6	
24	6	6	"	36	8	2	6	16	6	6	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	12	12	
40	10	6	"	56	14	6	10	30	20	"	
8	3	3	14	28	10	4	8	22	6	8	
20	12	8	21	61	20	8	12	40	22	20	
20	12	8	28	68	24	10	15	49	14	20	
15	6	4	30	55	14	8	8	30	12	10	
15	6	4	30	55	10	5	6	21	10	10	
15	6	4	40	65	10	5	6	21	8	10	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colvile House	Total, Peace River District
Books bound 2 gre . . . No. .	"	"	"	"
" 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . " .	"	2	"	2
" 1 " . . . " .	1	2	1	4
" $\frac{3}{4}$ " . . . " .	2	2	2	6
Marble 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . " .	"	2	"	2
" 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " . . . " .	"	2	"	2
" 1 " . . . " .	1	2	1	4
" $\frac{3}{4}$ " . . . " .	2	1	2	5
" $\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . " .	1	1	1	3
Borax lbs .	"	$\frac{1}{8}$	"	$\frac{1}{8}$
Borers tap No. .	2	2	"	4
Boxes japanned p Tobacco doz .	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	4
" with b.g. . . . " .	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	4
steel " .	1	2	1	4
shaving " .	$\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{2}{3}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Braces p .	6	12	"	18
Brimstone lb .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1
Buttons gilt coat . . . doz .	3	7	2	12
" vest " .	3	7	2	12
pewter coat " .	3	6	3	12
" vest " .	3	6	3	12
Candlesticks camp . . . p .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
japann'd " .	"	"	"	"
Compasses Carpenters . . . " .	"	"	"	"
Cocks brass No. .	1	1	1	3
p guns " .	"	6	"	6
Caps jockey " .	6	12	6	24
scarlet worsted . . . doz .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
grey worsted " .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
Capots, Chiefs Lace, red cloth trimmed with Lace Orris No. .	"	"	"	"
2nd cloth " .	4	8	3	15
Superfine " .	4	8	2	14
Ratteen " .	4	8	2	14

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	"	3	
5	"	"	"	5	2	"	"	2	2	2	
2	1	1	"	4	2	1	1	4	2	4	
2	2	2	"	6	2	2	2	6	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	2	2	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	2	2	
2	1	1	"	4	2	1	1	4	4	8	
1	2	2	"	5	1	2	2	5	2	4	
"	1	1	"	2	1	1	1	3	2	4	
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{8}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	2	"	4	1	1	1	3	3	2	
3	1	1	"	5	2	1	1	4	2	2	
3	1	1	"	5	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	2	2	
4	1	1	"	6	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	3	2	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	6		
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	2	
18	"	"	"	18	12	3	3	18	6	12	
18	"	"	"	18	12	3	3	18	6	12	
18	"	"	"	18	12	3	3	18	6		
12	"	"	"	12	12	3	3	18	6		
1	"	"	"	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	2	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	1	"	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	1	2	
2	2	2	"	6	2	2	2	6	3	4	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
12	"	"	"	12	12	"	"	12	"	6	
2	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$2\frac{1}{2}$	1	"	"	1	1	1	
2	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$2\frac{1}{2}$	1	"	"	1	1	1	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	10	6	
6	"	"	10	16	4	2	2	8	4	8	
6	"	"	6	12	4	2	2	8	"	2	
12	4	"	12	28	"	"	"	"	"	"	

[fo. 60]

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Capots, Hosely blue $3\frac{1}{2}$ Ells No. .	6	12	6	24
" 4 " " .	6	12	6	24
Molton 1 Ell . . . " .	9	15	6	30
" $1\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . " .	9	15	6	30
" 2 " . . . " .	9	15	6	30
" $2\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . " .	9	15	6	30
" 3 " . . . " .	9	15	6	30
" $3\frac{1}{2}$ " . . . " .	8	12	6	26
" 4 " . . . " .	8	12	6	26
Blanket . . . " .	"	"	"	"
Cards playing . . . packs	6	12	6	24
Chissels firmer $\frac{1}{2}$ inch ² . No. .	"	"	"	"
" $\frac{3}{4}$ " . . . " .	"	"	"	"
" 1 " . . . " .	"	"	"	"
" $1\frac{1}{4}$ " . . . " .	"	"	"	"
socket . . . " .	"	"	"	"
ice broad . . . " .	15	15	15	45
" narrow . . . " .	15	20	15	50
Cloth, blue plain . . . ps .	1	2	2	5
" corded . . . " .	2	2	3	7
" 2nd 22/- . . . yds. .	6	12	6	24
brown super . . . " .	6	12	5	23
embossed . . . " .	12	24	8	44
green plain . . . ps .	"	1	1	2
" corded . . . " .	1	$1\frac{1}{2}$	"	$2\frac{1}{2}$
" Superfine . . . yds. .	6	12	5	23
red plain . . . ps .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
" corded . . . " .	1	1	1	3
Scarlet super . . . yds .	6	23	6	35
white . . . ps .	1	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3
grey . . . " .	"	"	"	"
" Second . . . " .	"	"	"	"
" Superfine . . . yds .	5	12	6	23
Coatees mixed cloth 2 to 6 No. .	2	4	2	8

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
12	6	6	20	44	10	5	6	21	"	"	
12	6	6	20	44	10	5	6	21	10	"	
30	12	6	30	78	10	6	6	22	10	12	
30	12	6	30	78	12	4	6	22	10	12	
20	12	6	30	68	12	4	6	22	8	12	
30	12	6	30	78	14	6	10	30	6	12	
20	12	6	35	73	16	6	10	32	15	18	
20	6	6	30	62	10	8	8	26	10	20	
30	6	6	30	72	10	6	6	22	10	20	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	6	6	
24	"	"	"	24	12	3	3	18	12	12	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	1	1	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	1	1	
"	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	1	1	1	
"	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	1	1	1	
"	"	"	"	"	1	"	"	1	2	2	
50	15	10	"	75	20	10	15	45	60	60	
50	15	10	"	75	20	10	15	45	80	60	
4	"	"	3	7	2	1	1	4	1	2	
6	2	1	6	15	4	2	2	8	3	2	
23	"	"	"	23	23	"	"	23	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	23	
23	"	"	"	23	23	"	"	23	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	23	
44	"	"	"	44	12	"	"	12	12	22	
2	1	"	3	6	1	1	1	3	1	1	
2	1	"	3	6	1	1	1	3	1	1	
23	"	"	"	23	12	"	"	12	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	23	
1	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	"	"	1	"	1	
1	"	1	"	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	
23	"	"	"	23	12	"	"	12	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	23	
4	1	"	3	8	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	2	1	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	"	1	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	"	"	
23	"	"	"	23	8	"	"	8	"	23	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	4	8	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>			PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
			Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Coatees drab jean	2 to 6	No. .	2	4	2	8
Combs horn large	. . .	doz .	3	6	2	11
„ small	. . .	„ .	1	2	1	4
ivory small	. . .	„ .	1	2	1	4
Corduroy olive	. . .	yds .	„	12	„	12
Cotton Printed	. . .	yds .	14	56	28	98
striped	. . .	„ .	26	26	13	65
Dishes tin	. . .	p .	„	„	„	„
Drawers flannel	. . .	„ .	„	6	„	6
Duffle white ³	. . .	ps .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
striped	. . .	„ .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
green	. . .	yds .	6	12	„	18
Feathers cock	. . .	No. .	6	24	6	36
foxtail	. . .	„ .	6	24	6	36
plumes	. . .	„ .	6	24	6	36
Ostrich	. . .	„ .	6	24	6	36
red to go round Hats	„ .	„ .	„	„	„	„
Ferreting	. . .	gro. .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	„	$\frac{3}{4}$
Files 10 in bastard smooth	No. .	„ .	„	2	„	2
12 „ coarse flat	. . .	„ .	„	6	„	6
12 „ smooth flat	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
10 „ smooth flat	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
9 „ half round coarse	„ .	„ .	„	6	„	6
9 „ half round smooth	„ .	„ .	„	3	„	3
6 „ half round smooth	„ .	„ .	„	3	„	3
10 „ trading	. . .	„ .	24	48	24	96
8 „ Do.	. . .	„ .	36	72	24	132
10 „ round coarse	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
6 „ round coarse	. . .	„ .	„	3	„	3
7 „ bastard	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
10 „ safe edge	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
9 „ feather edge	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
x cut saw	. . .	„ .	„	2	„	2
hand saw	. . .	„ .	1	2	1	4

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
8	"	"	"	8	3	"	"	3	4	8	
8	2	2	"	12	4	2	2	8	6	8	
4	2	2	"	8	2	1	1	4	3	4	
4	1	1	"	6	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	2	4	
12	"	"	"	12	"	"	"	"	"	"	
12	"	"	"	12	28	"	"	28	28	56	
52	"	"	"	52	26	"	"	26	26	26	
3	"	"	"	3	2	"	"	2	2	6	
6	"	"	"	6	4	"	"	4	"	2	
1	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	"	$1\frac{1}{2}$	
1	"	"	"	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	1	3	
40	"	"	"	40	12	"	"	12	12	30	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	12	24	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	12	24	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	12	24	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	12	24	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	12	12	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	"	"	
73	15	12	"	100	30	15	15	60	72	48	
73	15	12	"	100	40	15	15	70	96	96	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"	"	"	3	2	"	1	3	2	12	
8	"	"	"	8	2	1	1	4	3	6	

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OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>		PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
		Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Files pit saw	No. .	1	2	"	3
rat tail	" .	6	6	"	12
tennon	" .	"	2	"	2
Flags H.B. Coy.	" .	"	"	"	"
Indian	" .	"	"	"	"
Flannel white	yds .	6	24	15	45
fine	" .	6	24	"	30
Flints p gun	No. .	500	1500	500	2500
Fowling pieces	" .	3	4	2	9
Fringe white	yds .	12	24	"	36
Funnel tin small	No. .	1	1	1	3
Gartering broad brace webb gro. .		$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1
scarlet	" .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$1\frac{3}{4}$
fancy	" .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Highland	" .	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	"	$1\frac{1}{4}$
M.L.S.	" .	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{3}{4}$
silk Lace	" .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{3}{4}$
narrow	" .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	2
Grindstone	No. .	"	1	"	1
Gauze green	yds .	6	6	"	12
Gimblets assorted	No. .	12	24	12	48
spike	" .	2	2	"	4
Ginger	lb .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
Glasses looking book	doz. .	2	6	2	10
" dutch	" .	1	3	1	5
" oval	" .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
wine	" .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
p window	" .	1	2	"	3
Gowns printed	No. .	"	4	"	4
Guns common	" .	14	16	10	40
fine 68/-	" .	"	8	"	8
Hammer claw	" .	1	1	"	2
hand	" .	"	1	"	1
bench	" .	"	1	"	1

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
8	"	"	"	8	2	"	"	2	2	6	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	2	2	
"	"	"	"	"	"	I	I	2	2	12	
46	"	"	"	46	24	"	"	24	23	23	
24	"	"	"	24	"	"	"	"	12	23	
1500	350	250	"	2100	1000	500	500	2000	1500	2000	
4	"	"	"	4	"	"	"	"	"	2	
24	"	"	"	24	"	"	"	"	"	12	
I	I	I	"	3	I	I	I	3	2	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$2\frac{3}{4}$	I	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	5	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$2\frac{3}{4}$	I	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$I\frac{3}{4}$	I	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$2\frac{3}{4}$	I	I	I	3	2	2	
4	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$4\frac{1}{4}$	2	$\frac{1}{4}$	I	$3\frac{3}{4}$	I	2	
2	I	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$3\frac{1}{4}$	I	$\frac{1}{4}$	I	$2\frac{1}{4}$	I	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	I	"	"	I	"	I	
3	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$3\frac{3}{4}$	I	"	"	I	2	3	
I	"	"	"	I	"	"	"	"	"	"	
12	"	"	"	12	6	"	"	6	6	12	
24	6	6	"	36	12	6	6	24	24	24	
2	"	"	"	2	I	I	I	3	2	3	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
4	I	I	"	6	2	I	I	4	4	4	
3	I	I	"	5	2	I	I	4	3	6	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	
I	"	"	"	I	I	"	"	I	I	I	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	"	"	
24	8	8	16	56	16	8	16	40	54	27	
8	"	"	"	8	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	I	"	I	2	2	2	
I	"	"	"	I	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colvile House	Total, Peace River District
Hammer sledge No. .	”	1	”	1
Handfs. Bandanna doz. .	0	1	”	1
black Barcelona ” .	1	3	1	5
Britannia cotton ” .	”	2	”	2
Chintz ” .	”	1	”	1
Cotton ” .	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$
fancy silk Bands. . . . ” .	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Romalls ” .	”	1	”	1
spotted cotton ” .	”	1	”	1
Hats Beaver 16/8 No. .	3	6	”	9
22/9 ” .	3	2	2	7
common ” .	2	8	2	12
p children ” .	”	3	”	3
” youths ” .	”	3	”	3
bands & tassels doz .	2	2	1	5
Covers Lawn ” .	1	1	”	2
” Silk ” .	1	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Hatchets 4/5 No. .	15	25	10	50
4/10 ” .	20	25	15	60
5/9 ” .	15	30	15	60
8/4 ” .	6	12	4	22
Hooks cod hundd	”	”	”	”
trout ” .	”	”	”	”
Hinges p .	”	”	”	”
Horns Powder 3/4 lb No. .	6	18	8	32
Jackets buff Nankeen ” .	1	3	1	5
drab Nankeen ” .	1	3	1	5
blue cloth ” .	3	6	2	11
” super ” .	3	6	2	11
drab cord ” .	2	8	2	12
olive cord ” .	2	8	2	12
Ink powder black pap .	2	4	1	7
red ” .	$\frac{1}{2}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Iron bar $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch cwt .	”	$\frac{1}{2}$	”	$\frac{1}{2}$

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"	"	"	3	2	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	I	3	
3	I	I	"	5	2	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	I	2	
4	"	"	"	4	2	"	"	2	I	4	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	I	4	
3	"	"	"	3	2	I	I	4	I	6	
3	"	"	"	3	I	"	"	4	I	3	
2	"	"	"	2	I	I	I	3	I	6	
2	"	"	"	2	I	"	"	I	I	I	
4	"	"	"	4	I	"	"	I	4	2	
"	"	"	"	"	I	"	"	I	"	"	
8	2	2	"	12	2	2	2	6	4	8	
4	"	"	"	4	"	"	"	"	"	3	
4	"	"	"	4	"	"	"	"	"	3	
2	"	"	"	2	2	I	I	4	I	2	
2	"	"	"	2	I	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	I	2	
3	"	"	"	3	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	I	2	
"	12	10	"	22	20	10	10	40	"	40	
60	12	10	"	82	20	5	10	35	80	70	
60	12	6	"	78	20	10	12	42	100	100	
18	3	6	"	27	12	6	6	24	12	8	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	$2\frac{1}{2}$	I	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	2	I	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	I	$1\frac{1}{2}$	
"	"	"	"	"	"	3	3	6	12	12	
24	6	6	"	36	15	6	9	30	12	15	
3	"	"	"	3	3	"	"	3	"	6	
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	"	6	
6	"	"	"	6	4	2	2	8	6	6	
6	"	"	"	6	3	I	I	5	6	6	
6	"	"	"	6	4	I	3	8	8	6	
6	"	"	"	6	4	I	3	8	8	6	
4	2	2	"	8	3	2	2	7	3	6	
$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$2\frac{1}{2}$	I	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	I	3	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Iron bar $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch . . . cwt. .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
rod " .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
Kettles copper nest .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
camp " .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
tea 3 Galls No. .	"	"	"	"
$1\frac{1}{2}$ " " .	"	"	"	"
Knives brass inlaid . . . doz .	2	2	2	6
yew hdlr fine " .	1	2	1	4
& forks " .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
clasp " .	1	2	1	4
pen " .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1
roach " .	6	18	6	30
yew " .	6	15	6	27
Leggins white p .	"	6	"	6
scarlet " .	"	12	"	12
olive " .	"	6	"	6
Linen Irish yds .	13	26	13	52
Lace Orris ⁴ gro .	"	1	"	1
Line cod No. .	1	1	1	3
chalk " .	"	2	"	2
Locks cabin " .	"	2	"	2
pad " .	1	1	"	2
stock " .	1	1	"	2
Molasses keg .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
Nets $3\frac{7}{8}$ in 26 mesh deep, 45 fathms. length . . No. .	"	"	"	"
5 in 15 mesh 75 fath. . " .	"	"	"	"
Nails 24ny Hund	"	3	"	3
20ny " .	"	3	"	3
10ny " .	"	4	"	4
Needles brown thread . . No. .	100	100	50	250
glovers " .	50	100	50	200
quilting " .	100	100	100	300
white chapel " .	100	300	100	500

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ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$3\frac{1}{2}$	2	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	2	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	1	1	"	5	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$2\frac{1}{2}$	2	2	
3	1	1	"	5	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	2	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	1	
4	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$5\frac{1}{2}$	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	3	10	
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{6}$	$\frac{1}{6}$	"	$5\frac{5}{6}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$3\frac{5}{12}$	$3\frac{1}{2}$	1	
10	3	2	"	15	8	4	4	16	12	24	
15	3	2	"	20	8	4	4	16	14	24	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
52	"	"	"	52	26	"	"	26	"	26	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	1	1	
3	1	1	"	5	1	1	1	3	3	6	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	"	3	
2	"	"	"	2	2	"	"	2	2	3	
3	"	"	"	3	1	1	1	3	3	6	
"	"	"	"	"	"	1	1	2	3	6	
1	"	"	"	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	15	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	10	"	
3	"	"	"	3	1	"	"	1	3	3	
3	"	"	"	3	1	"	"	1	3	3	
4	"	"	"	4	1	"	"	1	4	4	
100	25	25	"	150	100	50	50	200	100	300	
100	25	25	"	150	100	50	50	200	100	300	
100	25	25	"	150	100	50	50	200	100	300	
500	50	50	"	600	200	100	100	400	200	1000	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Pans tin No. 1 No. .	2	3	2	7
„ 2 „ .	2	3	2	7
„ 3 „ .	2	3	2	7
„ 4 „ .	2	3	2	7
„ 5 „ .	2	3	2	7
„ 6 „ .	2	3	2	7
„ 7 „ .	2	3	2	7
„ 8 „ .	2	3	2	7
Paper blotting qre .	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	„	$\frac{3}{4}$
cartridge „ .	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$
foolscap „ .	2	6	1	9
„ ruled „ .	1	6	2	9
quarto post „ .	1	4	„	5
pot „ .	„	2	„	2
sand „ .	„	$\frac{1}{6}$	„	$\frac{1}{6}$
Pencils black lead No. .	3	6	3	12
slate „ .	3	6	6	15
Pincers p .	„	„	„	„
Pins lb .	„	1	„	1
Pipes Hunters doz .	4	28	4	36
Pistols common p .	2	2	2	6
Planes jack No. .	„	„	„	„
hand „ .	„	„	„	„
smoothing „ .	„	„	„	„
grooving $\frac{3}{4}$ inch p .	„	„	„	„
bead „ .	„	„	„	„
Plates tin flat No. .	3	6	3	12
screw & taps mid size „ .	„	1	„	1
Pomatum rolls .	6	12	6	24
Pots japann'd 1 qt No. .	1	2	1	4
„ 1 pt „ .	1	2	1	4
„ $\frac{1}{2}$ pt „ .	2	4	2	8
„ $\frac{1}{4}$ & $\frac{1}{8}$ pt „ .	2	4	2	8
tin 1 qt „ .	„	2	„	2

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
2	"	I	"	3	2	"	"	2	I	I	
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	I	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	I	I	I	
I	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$I\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	I	2	2	
8	2	2	"	12	3	I	I	5	3	6	
8	I	I	"	10	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	4	4	6	
4	I	I	"	6	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	3	2	6	
2	"	"	"	2	I	"	"	I	I	6	
$\frac{1}{6}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{6}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	3	3	"	12	6	2	2	10	6	12	
6	3	3	"	12	6	2	2	10	6	12	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	I	I	
I	"	"	"	I	I	"	"	I	I	I	
36	"	"	"	36	12	"	3	15	12	24	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	6	6	
2	"	"	"	2	I	"	"	I	I	I	
2	"	"	"	2	I	I	I	3	I	I	
"	"	"	"	"	I	"	"	I	I	I	
I	"	"	"	I	I	"	"	I	I	I	
I	"	"	"	I	"	"	"	"	"	"	
24	"	"	"	24	12	3	3	18	18	18	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	12	20	
2	I	I	"	4	I	I	I	3	2	4	
4	I	I	"	6	I	I	I	3	3	4	
4	2	2	"	8	2	I	I	4	4	4	
2	I	I	"	4	2	2	2	6	4	4	
2	"	"	"	2	"	I	I	2	I	3	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Pots tin 1 pt No. .	2	4	3	9
„ $\frac{1}{2}$ „ „ .	2	6	„	8
Powder kegs .	3	6	3	12
Rasps 12 in flat No. .	„	2	„	2
10 in half round „ .	„	2	„	2
Razors doz doz .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
in cases No. .	„	3	„	3
Ribbon sarsnett narrow . ps .	$1\frac{1}{2}$	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$	7
„ broad „ .	$1\frac{1}{2}$	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$	7
sattin „ .	$1\frac{1}{2}$	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$	7
hair „ .	$1\frac{1}{2}$	4	$1\frac{1}{2}$	7
24ny Sarsnett „ .	„	2	„	2
Rings finger brass doz .	12	24	12	48
„ silver „ .	1	2	1	4
„ gilt „ .	1	2	1	4
„ ear p .	6	12	6	24
Rosin lb .	„	$\frac{1}{2}$	„	$\frac{1}{2}$
Rubber India ps .	1	1	„	2
Rules 2 feet No. .	„	1	„	1
Rum Spirits kegs .	8	14	8	30
Salmoniac lb .	„	$\frac{1}{8}$	„	$\frac{1}{8}$
Salt Petre „ .	„	1	„	1
Saws x cut No. .	„	1	„	1
pit „ .	„	„	„	„
tennon „ .	„	1	„	1
turning hand „ .	„	„	„	„
hand „ .	1	1	1	3
Silver works an assortment „ .	„	1	„	1
Scissars small 8/- doz .	2	4	$\frac{1}{6}$	$6\frac{1}{6}$
fine „ „ .	„	1	„	1
Scythes No. .	1	2	1	4
Seeds p Garden an assortment „ .	„	1	„	1
Shawls 1st size „ .	3	6	„	9
2nd size „ .	3	6	„	9

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
4	1	1	"	6	1	"	"	1	3	3	
2	1	1	"	4	1	"	"	1	"	"	
10	2	2	10	24	5	2	3	10	6	6	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	1	1	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	1	1	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	1	1	
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	2	1	1	4	3	6	
6	"	"	"	6	2	1	1	4	2	6	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	3	6	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	3	6	
4	"	"	"	4	1	"	"	1	1	2	
24	12	12	"	48	12	6	6	24	12	36	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	3	
4	"	"	"	4	1	"	"	1	"	4	
12	"	"	"	12	6	"	"	6	"	12	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	2	3	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	1	1	
16	4	6	30	56	12	4	6	22	6	2	
$\frac{1}{8}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{8}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	"	1	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	1	1	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	1	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	"	1	1	2	2	2	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
4	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$6\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	2	"	"	3	4	8	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	2	2	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	1	1	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	4	6	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	4	6	

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OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>		PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
		Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Shawls 3rd size	No. .	3	6	1	10
4th "	" .	3	6	1	10
Sheeting white	yds .	12	56	26	94
Shirts Calico p adults . . .	No. .	12	24	6	42
" " youths	" .	6	12	6	24
" " boys	" .	6	12	6	24
" " infants	" .	6	12	6	24
cotton	" .	24	60	36	120
checked	" .	12	24	6	42
flannel white	" .	3	6	3	12
" red	" .	3	6	3	12
" white, (<i>under</i>)	" .	"	12	"	12
white fine	" .	3	6	3	12
Shrub ⁵	keg .	"	1	"	1
Shoes bound	p .	3	12	2	17
common	" .	3	12	3	18
womens	" .	3	6	"	9
Shot B.B. ⁶	bag .	1	3	1	5
of Numbers	" .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
L.J.	" .	3	6	3	12
Silk Sewing assorted colors	lb .	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{5}{8}$
Slates	No. .	1	1	1	3
Snuffers japann'd	p .	1	2	1	4
polished	" .	"	1	"	1
Soap	lb .	14	56	14	84
Solder soft	" .	"	1	"	1
Spades	" .	"	2	"	2
Speltre	lb .	"	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	$\frac{1}{4}$
Sponge	No. .	"	6	"	6
Spoons table	doz .	1	2	"	3
tea	" .	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	"	$2\frac{1}{2}$
Steel German ⁷	lb .	"	28	"	28
blister	" .	"	14	"	14
yards	p .	1	"	"	1

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	4	6	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	4	6	
80	"	"	"	80	40	"	"	40	40	40	
24	"	"	"	24	12	"	"	12	12	21	
24	"	"	"	24	6	"	"	6	12	12	
12	"	"	"	12	6	"	"	6	12	12	
12	"	"	"	12	6	"	"	6	12	12	
80	12	6	"	98	48	6	12	66	18	48	
80	12	6	"	98	12	6	12	30	12	72	
12	3	3	"	18	6	"	"	6	6	6	
12	3	3	"	18	6	"	"	6	6	6	
24	"	"	"	24	6	"	"	6	6	12	
18	"	"	"	18	6	"	"	6	6	12	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	4	"	"	4	4	12	
12	"	"	"	12	6	"	"	6	4	12	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	"	12	
8	1	1	10	20	2	1	2	5	4	6	
1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	2	1	1	"	2	"	"	
8	2	2	10	22	4	2	2	8	8	4	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	1	
"	1	1	"	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	
2	"	"	"	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	2	2	
84	"	"	"	84	56	"	"	56	56	56	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	1	"	2	1	"	"	1	1	3	
$\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	2	6	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	2	
2	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	3	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	1	1	
28	"	"	"	28	"	"	"	"	"	"	
14	"	"	"	14	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	1	1	"	2	"	1	1	2	2	2	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
Steel fire ⁸ doz .	6	8	6	20
Springs main No. .	"	6	"	6
seer ⁹ " .	"	6	"	6
hammer " .	"	6	"	6
Stockings cotton doz .	$\frac{1}{4}$	1	"	$1\frac{1}{4}$
worsted " .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
Straps carrying No. .	"	"	"	"
Stone rag " .	1	2	1	4
scythe " .	1	2	1	4
turkey oil " .	"	1	"	1
Swansdown yds .	12	36	12	60
Thimbles brass doz .	1	3	"	4
p taylor's " .	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$\frac{1}{2}$
silver " .	"	1	"	1
Tents square No. .	2	2	2	6
15 Ells " .	"	"	"	"
Thread color'd lb .	2	4	1	7
white " .	1	2	1	4
Tobacco twist rolls .	3	5	3	11
carrot ¹⁰ No. .	13	40	20	73
Towels doz .	"	2	"	2
Traps Beaver No. .	12	25	6	43
Trowsers cloth, blue . . . p .	6	12	"	18
" fine " .	"	12	"	12
cotton striped . . . " .	6	12	"	18
drab cord " .	6	18	4	28
olive cord " .	6	18	6	30
drab jean " .	"	4	"	4
drab Nankeen " .	"	4	"	4
striped Nankeen . . . " .	"	6	"	6
duck " .	"	12	"	12
buff Nankeen " .	"	6	"	6
Trunks 1 No. .	1	2	"	3
2 " .	1	2	"	3

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
12	4	4	"	20	6	2	4	12	15	18	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
2	"	"	"	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	
"	"	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	1	
2	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"	12	12	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	1	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
60	5	5	"	70	24	"	"	24	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	2	2	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	1	1	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
3	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"	2	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	1	
6	1	1	"	8	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	$4\frac{1}{2}$	8	18	
3	1	1	"	5	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	3	4	4	
8	2	2	16	28	5	2	3	10	7	7	
56	12	12	"	80	36	"	"	36	18	30	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	1	
12	3	3	"	18	12	"	6	18	"	18	
12	"	"	"	12	3	2	2	7	12	18	
12	"	"	"	12	3	2	2	7	6	8	
6	"	"	"	6	6	"	"	6	6	12	
12	"	"	"	12	6	2	2	10	3	6	
12	"	"	"	12	6	2	2	10	3	6	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	"	6	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	"	6	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	"	6	
6	"	"	"	6	6	"	"	6	4	12	
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	2	6	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	1	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	1	

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OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>		PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
		Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colvile House	Total, Peace River District
Trunks 3	No. .	1	2	"	3
4	" .	1	2	"	3
Tumblers glass	" .	"	6	"	6
japann'd 1 Pt	" .	6	12	6	24
" $\frac{1}{2}$ pt	" .	3	6	3	12
p guns	" .	"	6	"	6
Twine No. 1	skeins	24	30	24	78
" 2	"	"	"	"	"
" 5 & 6	"	2	4	2	8
" 9	"	2	3	2	7
Vermillion 11	lb .	3	6	2	11
Vice bench	No. .	"	1	"	1
hand small size	" .	"	1	"	1
large size	" .	"	1	"	1
Varnish	pt .	"	"	"	"
Waistcoats buff	No. .	1	5	3	9
cloth scarlet	" .	1	6	"	7
drab jean	" .	1	5	"	6
Lt & olive cord	" .	2	5	"	7
quilting	" .	1	5	3	9
swansdown	" .	1	5	2	8
white jean	" .	1	5	2	8
Wafers	box .	"	1	"	1
Wax bees	lb .	"	1	"	1
sealing	" .	$\frac{1}{16}$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{16}$	$\frac{1}{4}$
Weights & Scales $\frac{1}{2}$ oz to 4 lb					
	No. .	"	1	"	1
Wire brass large	lb .	"	"	"	"
snaring brass	" .	2	2	"	4
iron binding	" .	"	3	"	3
" pinning	" .	2	4	2	8
Worms gun	doz .	2	3	3	8
Worsted assorted colors	lb .	2	6	2	10
Plough shear	No. .	"	1	"	1

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	1	
2	"	"	"	2	1	"	"	1	"	1	
6	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	"	"	"	
24	"	"	"	24	6	3	3	12	12	18	
12	"	"	"	12	"	"	"	"	6	12	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
200	"	"	180	380	75	45	45	165	100	100	
140	60	12	180	392	75	51	51	177	100	150	
24	4	1	20	49	13	8	8	29	12	50	
30	6	1	20	57	18	12	12	42	25	34	
6	2	2	"	10	4	1	2	7	6	8	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
1	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"	"	"	
$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{2}$	"	"	"	"	"	"	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	2	2	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	1	1	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	1	1	
$\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	"	"	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	
1	"	"	"	1	1	"	"	1	"	"	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	6	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	8	4	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	
4	2	2	"	8	3	1	2	6	6	6	
2	2	2	"	6	2	3	3	8	3	4	
12	"	"	"	12	6	"	"	6	"	12	
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colvile House	Total, Peace River District
EQUIPMENTS ¹²				
Clerks No. .	1	3	2	6
Interpreters "	2	4	1	7
Men "	3	8	3	14
PROVISIONS &C				
Butter lb .	"	"	"	20
Coffee "	"	"	"	4
Chocolate "	"	"	"	4
Flour, 90 lb each . . . bags .	"	"	"	9
Mustard lb .	"	"	"	4
Nutmegs "	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{8}$
Pimento "	"	"	"	6
Pepper "	"	"	"	6
Rasins "	"	"	"	10
Rum Jamaica Gall .	"	"	"	20
Sugar Kegs	"	"	"	7
Tea black lb .	"	"	"	14
green "	"	"	"	14
Wine Gall .	"	"	"	5
Brandy "	"	"	"	5
Shrub "	"	"	"	5
CANOE AGRES ¹³				
Frying Pan No. .	"	"	"	4
Cod Line "	"	"	"	8
Oil cloth "	"	"	"	8
Sail & haulyards "	"	"	"	8
Sponge "	"	"	"	8
Kettle "	"	"	"	8
Hatchet "	"	"	"	8
Canoe Awl "	"	"	"	8
Tin pan "	"	"	"	8
Gum, bark & wattap p ea Canoe				

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
6	"	"	"	6	3	"	"	3	2	4	
6	"	"	"	6	2	"	"	2	4	2	
18	2	2	"	22	8	"	"	8	5	10	
"	"	"	"	76	"	"	"	20	56	56	
"	"	"	"	10	"	"	"	4	6	10	
"	"	"	"	4	"	"	"	4	6	10	
"	"	"	"	13	"	"	"	6	7	6	
"	"	"	"	4	"	"	"	4	2	4	
"	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{8}$	"	"	"	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{8}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	
"	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	2	2	4	
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	4	6	6	
"	"	"	"	30	"	"	"	10	10	"	
"	"	"	"	40	"	"	"	20	10	10	
"	"	"	"	10	"	"	"	5	5	5	
"	"	"	"	18	"	"	"	12	10	15	
"	"	"	"	18	"	"	"	12	10	15	
"	"	"	"	15	"	"	"	5	"	"	
"	"	"	"	10	"	"	"	5	"	10	
"	"	"	"	10	"	"	"	5	10	10	
"	"	"	"	4	"	"	"	3	2	3	16
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27
"	"	"	"	6	"	"	"	6	3	4	27

OUTFIT ATHABASCA DEPARTMENT 1821 & 22 <i>Continued</i>	PEACE RIVER DISTRICT			
	Fort de Pinnette	Fort St. Mary's	Colville House	Total, Peace River District
LEATHER				
Moose skins dressed . . . No. .	"	"	"	"
parchment . . . " .	"	"	"	"
Buffaloe Robes " .	"	"	"	"
Buffaloe Lines fath .	"	"	"	"
Sinews lb .	"	"	"	"
Beaver Nets No. .	"	"	"	"
Babiche lge & small . . . bun .	"	"	"	"

¹ Point Blankets were blankets supplied by the H.B.C. for the Indian trade or for the use of the Company's servants or voyageurs. The point is a short black stripe woven in the blanket indicating the size. Point blankets were first purchased by the H.B.C. in December 1779, from Mr. Thomas Empson; they were exported to Albany Fort, Hudson Bay, in 1780: they still figure largely in the Company's trade.

² Firmer chisels are thin, broad chisels, used for making mortices; adapted from the French *fermoir*.

³ A coarse woollen cloth having a thick nap or frieze, named after the town of Duffel, Brabant.

⁴ Lace of various patterns in gold or silver.

⁵ A drink prepared from spirits (often rum) and the juice of lemons, currants, raspberries, etc.

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT					GT. SLAVE LAKE DISTRICT				McKenzie's River District	New Caledonia District	TOTAL OUTFIT
Fort Wedderburn	Harrisons House	Berens House	Two Boats	Total, Athabasca Lake District	Fort Resolution	Mountain Island	Hay's River	Total, Great Slave Lake District			
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	30	100	130
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	20	"
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	12	12
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	800	800
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	30	"
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	20	"
"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	50	"

⁶ Shot is assorted by sizes distinguished by numbers (usually 1 to 10 or 12) or letters, such as BB (usually called double-B).

⁷ Before the invention of the Bessemer process of steel-making, steel was either "natural" steel, obtained from the ore by simple fusion, often known as German steel, or it was obtained by conversion from wrought-iron. In the latter case the iron was furnaced with carbon, which it absorbed, and from its appearance when it left the furnace it was known as "Blister-steel".

⁸ Steels to strike fire from flints.

⁹ Seer springs, usually spelt sear : to keep in position the sear in a gun, which keeps the hammer at full or half-cock and is released by the trigger.

¹⁰ Probably plug tobacco, cf. *Oxford English Dictionary*, Carrot.

¹¹ Vermilion was used by the Indians both to decorate themselves and to trap bees. Cf. Patrick Campbell's *Travels* (Champlain Society, 1937), p. 215.

¹² The goods supplied by the H.B.C. to its servants. Cf. *supra*, p. 47, Note 2.

¹³ The equipment of canoes ; from the French.

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November
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FORT WEDDERBURN, 30th November, 1820.

[fo. 65] JOHN CLARKE, ESQRE., }
Isle à la Crosse. }

SIR,

I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 22nd Sept. by a Canoe which I forwarded to your place according to previous arrangement for Mr. O'Doherty & Cochrane passengers and some goods particularly required for this Department. I have as yet heard nothing either of the Canoe or people, which gives me much uneasiness, as unless some unfortunate disaster has occurred, they must have been here long ago. I can scarcely suppose that you have detained them, indeed the warm interest you profess to take in the welfare of the Company's general affairs precludes a doubt on that score; they might have been here by open water up to the 10th Inst., if any accident has happened to the poor fellows, I shall regret it most sincerely, but if they are safe some one or more will most assuredly have cause to repent the neglect of duty: it puts us to the most serious loss and inconvenience, our Stores are now literally empty, and we have not the means of sending for supplies, the consequence will in all probability be that our Indians join the N.W. Coy., and the Trade of this District be ruined for the year. I trust you will be able to throw some light on this unfortunate business, and I dare say it will not require much ingenuity to exculpate yourself. In addition to the pieces which were to have come in the canoe I have to request that you will reserve for the use of this Department the goods mentioned in the enclosed list. If the people are still at your place, have the goodness to send them off without the delay of one hour, and provide dogs for the purpose of hauling the goods which you will charge to this District; they can be easily replaced from Green Lake or Carlton, here we have only three trains belonging to the Company, and about half a dozen belonging to the men which are insufficient to supply us with Fish; on the arrival of these men I will send others for

the remainder of the goods. I must entreat that you do not neglect this requisition as it is a matter of the most vital importance to the Compys. affairs in Athabasca. Mr. O'Doherty & Cochrane must come on without delay, their services are much required here and they are on no consideration to remain one day at Isle à la Crosse after the receipt of this Letter.

November
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Mr. Andries takes his departure from hence for McKenzie's River in Spring, a Canoe will be forwarded early for the Goods and provisions you have undertaken to furnish, and I beg that there may be no disappointment, as it is of the utmost consequence that another year should not be lost in establishing that valuable District.

I have Letters from Peace River to the 20th & 27th Ult., at those dates our prospects in that quarter were favorable; Mr. Giasson had not arrived when Mr. Finlayson wrote. As yet I have not heard from Great Slave Lake. If we had goods and a sufficient number of men here, this District would make handsome returns. Our Opponents have been rather troublesome and Mr. Grignon found it necessary in his Official Capacity to arrest Mr. Simon McGillivray on the 23rd Ultimo who is now a prisoner in this Fort; Isle à la Crosse would be a place of greater security; if you will send two men to Pierre aux Calumit or to this place for the purpose of conducting him, I shall furnish the Officer with two more, which he conceives will be a sufficient escort. Herewith I send a packet for Govr. Williams which I request you will forward to him immediately after receipt, as it is on urgent and important business: on the envelope you will please note the date and hour of it's receipt, also date and hour of it's being forwarded. Mr. Grignon will bring back the Athabasca fall packet which I request may be carefully wrapped up and forwarded with the least possible delay; he will only require three days to repose himself & dogs. I shall soon have occasion to address you again meantime, I remain, . . . Dear Sir . . .

Your most Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

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November List of Goods requested from Isle à la Crosse for Athabasca
1820 30th Nov. 1820.

Blankets striped	-	-	p.	2	These articles are independent of the Goods requested on the 22nd September, and those which Mr. Clarke has undertaken to furnish for McKenzie's River in the Spring.
3½ pt	-	-	"	1	
3 pt.	-	-	"	2	
2½ pt.	-	-	"	2	
Capots 4 Ells	-	-	No.	4	
3½ "	-	-	"	4	
3 "	-	-	"	4	
Cloth common	-	-	ps	2	
Knives yew	-	-	doz	3	
Shirts striped cotton	-	-	No.	24	
checked	-	-	"	12	

FORT WEDDERBURN, 30th November, 1820.

JOHN MCLEOD, ESQRE., or to the Gentn. in charge }
of the Post at Lac La Loche.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Grignon is the bearer of a dispatch on urgent business to Governor Williams; if he or the people who accompany him are unacquainted with the road from Portage La Loche to Isle ala Crosse, I have to request the favour of your giving them a guide and furnishing them with a sufficient quantity of provisions for the prosecution of their journey. Pray do not delay the Express more than is absolutely necessary, and mark on the Envelope of the Packet, the date of it's arrival and departure. Neither the Canoe nor people which I sent to Isle alà Crosse on the 22nd Septemr., have yet returned, which puts this District to a most serious loss and inconvenience as we have not a particle of Goods in the Store. If the people are at your Post have the goodness to forward them without the delay of one hour, and let each man have a train of dogs loaded with goods; The Dogs you may charge to this District or if you require them again I shall return them immediately after arrival. If the people are not come from Isle ala Crosse have the goodness to send me a Keg of Spirits and a roll of Tobacco by the man from Pierre aux Calumit, and let one of your people accompany him that length with a Train

DIRECTIONS FOR BERENS HOUSE 173

of Dogs, they are to come back on receipt of this instead of November
going on to Isle alà Crosse; you need not wait Mr. Clarkes 1820
sanction as I shall fully explain the circumstances of the case
to the Govr. in Chief and stand between you and all conse-
quences. If the Bale of Canadian Belts is at your place have
the goodness to open it and send me 3 doz of files of different [fo. 66]
sizes as we have not one to whet an axe. In the event of the
Bale being still at Isle ala Crosse, I beg the favor of your sending
me a few of those intended for your own Post. Mr. Grignon
will give you all the News from hence; our prospects in the
way of Trade are tolerable had we a sufficient quantity of goods
and men. Pray let me know the state of affairs with you on
public and private matters and with best wishes, I remain,

Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 30th November, 1820.

MR. JOSEPH GREILL, }
Berens-House. }

SIR,

I am favored with your Letter of 19th Inst. and regret
that it is not in my Power to supply all your wants. Our Stock
of Rum is very short, I can therefore only send you one Gallon
which you must endeavour to spin out to the best advantage
until our Store is replenished from Isle ala Crosse. We cannot
spare a single Blanket nor have we any Cloth. I find it will
be necessary to send Mr. McDougald to Harrisons House,
but Mr. Vignau who is an active young man will fill his place;
keep this Gentleman on the alert, he talks Cree and you will
find him useful. Have the goodness to secure about 1000
fathoms of Babiche and all the Dressed Leather and parchment
Skins you can trade for New Caladonia, and you will be pleased
to hold yourself in readiness to cross the Mountain in Spring
with Mr. Brown & party as it is probable your services will be
required in that quarter. The Knives are herewith sent. If
your dogs had been kept at the house instead of sent to the
Indian Tents on board Wages they would have been safe;

November 1820 I am sorry we cannot replace them as there are not a sufficient number of Trains here to furnish us with Fish. Many thanks for the Bag of Pemican, it will be very useful. I am sorry we cannot spare you a man at present but on the return of the people from Isle ala Crosse you shall have one. Your people complain bitterly that Mrs. Greill makes no shoes for them; it is customary for the Ladies of this country to do all that is required in that way about the Fort, and I hope there will be no further cause of complaint on the subject; the Woman & child you know are a heavy expense on the Post and it is not unreasonable to require that she works for her maintenance.

Have the goodness to supply the Bearer Mr. Grignon with whatever Provisions he may require for his journey to Lac La Loche, he must not be detained at your post as he is the Bearer of important Dispatches; if the Isle ala Crosse people have not yet got to your place, send one of your men along with him to Lac La Loche for a Keg of Rum and Roll of Tobacco I have ordered from thence, let him take his dogs with him and the Gentleman in charge of the Post at Lac La Loche will send a man back with him to Berens House: the Keg of Rum you may keep but the Tobacco must be forwarded here immediately. Take out of the Bale half a Dozen Files and let it be carefully repacked and forwarded. It is unnecessary to repeat that I trust you will use every exertion to lay up a good stock of Provisions and secure all the Furs you can fall in with. Herewith I send our Indian Debt List which you will attend to particularly. Please mark on the Envelope of the Dispatch the date of it's recpt. and departure. With best wishes, I remain, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 30th November, 1820.

GENTLEMEN,

I hereby take the liberty of requesting that you will forward the accompanying dispatch to William Williams Esqre. Govr. in Chief of Ruperts Land with the utmost expedition and that you will note on the annexed Page the Date of it's

rect., also the date of it's being forwarded from your respective November
 Posts: the Bearer to be furnished with provisions for his 1820
 maintenance in the prosecution of his Journey and any neces-
 saries he may absolutely stand in need of, the Expenses incurred
 you will please charge to the Athabasca Department.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your Most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON Agent.

for the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy., Athabasca.

To

The Gentn. in charge of the Honble.
 H.B. Coys. establishments on the Track
 to Cumberland or the winter residence¹
 of Wm. Williams Esqre. Govr. in Chief
 of Ruperts Land.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 30th Nov., 1820.

JAMES BIRD,² ESQRE.

MY DEAR SIR,

The deep interest you feel in the Compys general
 affairs will no doubt render a few lines from this part of the
 country acceptable and I am satisfied that it will afford you
 much pleasure to learn that the business of this Department is
 in a more regular train than it has hitherto been and the
 prospects of returns by no means unfavourable when compared
 with former years. Your salutary and friendly advices have
 been most useful, the scenes of extravagance which has hitherto
 characterized our intercourse with the Chipewyans are dis-
 continued and Œconomy in every branch of the Trade sub-
 stituted; this work of reform was attended with much trouble,
 but the doctrine I have held out to the Natives will in my
 opinion animate their exertions, and be attended with lasting
 good effects. If our Grey friends³ had been a little more atten-

¹ Governor Williams spent the winter of 1820-21 at Cumberland House.

² Simpson had met Bird at the Rock Depot. There Bird gave him some
 friendly advice and remonstrated with Clarke on his behalf.

³ Probably the N.W.C. Grey was the colour of the N.W.C., blue of the
 H.B.C.

November
1820

tive to this course, and had studied the general welfare of the business entrusted to their charge, instead of devoting their time and ingenuity to intrigue, cabal, petty jealousies and self Importance, their Employers would have been considerably in pocket now, but I sincerely hope that internal war is at an end, and that the Compys. interest will from henceforward be the sole object of attainment. We are sadly in want of goods and men, and had there been an abundant supply of both this season, our Opponents would not have had a leg to stand on in Athabasca. I have Letters from Finlayson up to the 20th Ultimo, he had equipped his Indians on Œconomical terms, secured a good stock of Provisions and had the prospect of turning the affairs of that District into tolerable order; his returns if no unforeseen casualty happens, will I think prove that he is a good Trader: I wish we had a few more out of your school,¹ I now find that it is the seminary for men of Talent.

[fo. 67] The party that had gone across the Mountain were not returned when Finlayson wrote and I am apprehensive that some unfortunate accident has occurred to them; if so, the North West Co. are assuredly at the bottom of it; the Villain Black and a few of his desperate associates proceeded from hence for that destination in June. If Giasson does not make his appearance in the course of the Winter or early in Spring, it will be impossible to establish New Caladonia next year as the Iroquois who undertook to conduct and introduce us to the Natives will not re-engage until all doubts are removed as to his safety. Mr. Andries is I think making very judicious arrangements for McKenzie's River, and if Mr. Clark fulfill's his promise of a Canoe load of goods and pemican in Spring, he will take his departure from hence in the month of June. Our Opponents have been troublesome but as yet no blood shed, Keith, is in charge of Fort Chipewyan and Simon McGillivray was appointed to succeed Black at the Watch house; he made some hostile demonstrations which proved abortive and Mr. Grignon the Officer took upon himself the responsibility of apprehending him; he is now *en Cache* here and gives

¹ Finlayson had been under Bird in 1819-20, when he was in the Red River District.

a little trouble in the way of Correspondence. As you will no doubt have the arrangement of our supplies for next year at York, I shall depend on our Indents being completed in a Business like manner. Athabasca agrees with me tolerably well and I can now eat White fish as well as any Voyageur in the Country, it must however be confessed that the Flesh Pots of Egypt do sometimes obtrude themselves on my thoughts:—As yet we have not even seen animal food. I trust your Rheumatick complaint is quite gone and that you have now got the perfect use of your limbs. I shall be glad to hear from you at Cumberland or Norway House if you go to York previous to my arrival. With best wishes, I remain, My dear Sir,—
Yours very truly

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

In addition to the foregoing Letters, I have enclosed in the Govrs. Packet, a Copy of all correspondence connected with the North West Coy. up to this date, Copy of the Warrant on which Mr. Simon McGillivray was apprehended, also copy of the Agreement entered into by Mr. McAulay with the N.W. Coy. relative to the affairs of Pierre aux Calumit. Mr. Grignon & Larance are preparing to start with the Packet for Isle à la Crosse tomorrow Morning. Received a supply of Fish from the Old Fort and Big Island.

December 1820

1st, Friday : I and the rest of the Gentlemen sat up all Night making arrangements for the departure of Mr. Grignon with the Dispatches, they are made up in two sealed duplicate packets addressed to the Governor in Chief; one Copy packed up with the provisions on Mr. Grignon's train and the other sewn up in the hood of Larances Capot: I have given directions that if either are taken by the N.W. the other is if possible to make the best of his way to any of our establishments where he will receive the necessary assistance to prosecute his Journey. At four O'Clock A.M. they took their departure for Isle à la Crosse accompanied by Mr. Vignau and Laserte for Beren's House; at the same time Mr. McDougald and Dumain

December started for Harrison's House and Seven Trains to the old Fort
 1820 for Fish. Altho' the utmost care and secrecy was observed in dispatching Mr. Grignon, the N.W. people were on Foot and saw him depart; I sent a man into the woods to see if they followed, he informs me that our people went in a body about three miles from hence to a part of the Lake where the Ice was smooth, the snow having drifted therefrom and Mr. Grignon struck off from thence (in order that his track might not be discovered) for the Rivierre Embarras; two N.W. men followed a little way but did not go to the spot where the party separated, so that it is probable Mr. Grignon's route is undiscovered.

Chaurit and a young Indian arrived from the Fort Hunters this Evening who have killed two Buffaloe and two Moose; the Cache's are six days march from hence and it will be very inconvenient to send so far as we have not half a dozen trains of good Dogs now in the Fort. The Hunters have been extremely unfortunate until the late fall of snow and were reduced to the necessity of eating parchment skins and Babiche for several days: they are very superstitious and an idea has possessed them that the N.W. have 'thrown bad medicine upon them' which no argument can subvert.

2nd, Saturday: The weather mild and very hazy. Bouche and Dumaine arrived from the Crees; they have brought some dressed Leather, a few Rat skins and about 150 lbs of Venison: —they met two N.W. men in search of the same band whose provisions were exhausted, and Bouche gave them a small supply of meat to enable them to return: it is usual for the servants of both Companies to assist each other when short of provisions on their return from Derouinne's and as Bouche has been frequently supplied in this manner I found no fault for rendering assistance on the present occasion. The Trains that started yesterday returned this morning with a supply of Fish. Had an Interview with Mr. McGillivray who complained that Knipe the man that waits upon him is not sufficiently attentive, he promises however to be more so in future.

3rd, Sunday: A considerable quantity of snow fell in the course of last night, and the weather to day is very severe. It

was intended that some of the men should go to the Old Fort this morning, altho' Sunday, and return on Tuesday in order to save a day's provisions at the Fort, but as the weather is boisterous and the men have pleaded earnestly to be permitted to remain, if even deprived of their allowance I have consented to indulge them and afterwards directed their allowance of Fish to be served out. I cannot help remarking that this indulgence, has given Mr. Brown considerable offence as it alters his previous arrangements: this Gentleman makes himself extremely obnoxious to the Officers and Men by his arbitrary measures which savour more of pique towards those people, than zeal in the cause of his Employers; his Edicts are as absolute and unalterable as those of the ' Medes & Persians ' and I am frequently under the necessity of interposing, otherwise nothing short of open Rebellion would prevail in the Fort: A little flattery and good humour properly timed will mollify the most obdurate and stubborn Canadian or Halfbreed in the service and ensure his attachment; severe measures must also be occasionally resorted to, but uniform harsh and arbitrary treatment alienates all their better qualities which are supplanted by an insatiable and studied thirst for Revenge and as we are now situated it would be highly impolitic to give rise to disaffection amongst our people; it is therefore my province very frequently to allay the storm which Mr. Browns harsh measures produce: his ungainly manner is more his misfortune than his fault: his prejudices against Canadians are so violent that policy itself cannot Master his private feelings: It is however but doing that Gentleman justice to say that he is a zealous interested Servant, possessing good natural abilities and sufficiently firm and determined in time of danger. [fo. 68]

4th, Monday: Last night I retired to Bed at ten O'Clock P.M. leaving Mr. Brown in charge of the watch; about that hour he went into Clouston's Room which adjoins the prisoners, and since the watch has been established is used as a Guard Room. Until 1 O'Clock this morning every thing was quiet about the Fort; but in taking his rounds at that hour, he was surprised to see lights in the N.W. Houses, their Fires all lit and a number of people continually passing between their

December Houses and Bastion; this unusual circumstance excited a sus-
 1820 picion that they were about to attack our Fort, he therefore gave me intimation thereof, when I immediately dressed, started all the Officers and some of our most confidential men, and in a few minutes we assembled under arms in the Hall to the number of about twenty; the morning being extremely cold I gave the people a dram and stationed them in the Bastions and in various parts of the Fort in order to repel any assault our Opponents might attempt to make. I directed Bouche the Interpreter to get as near the North West Houses as possible for the purpose of reconnoitering; on his return he informed me that while listening close to their Bastion he observed a number of people bustling about the Houses under arms; one man came to the Bastion and said to those within 'The English are up,' a voice replied, 'yes, and one of them is now listening close to the Port Hole of the Bastion.' Bouche finding himself discovered thought it judicious to retreat.

From the Upper Bastion I distinctly saw them at various times in groups of five or six people watching our proceedings. About three O'Clock every man in the Fort was under arms and little doubt remained that an attack was contemplated, but that finding us on the alert the plan was abandoned: the people were in high spirits and every man seemed anxious to have an opportunity of showing his zeal and courage: the morning being bitterly cold I gave the people a second dram and they danced a few Reels in the Hall for the sake of Exercise as it was impossible to remain inactive on account of the severity of the weather. The noise about the Fort I conceived had roused the prisoner as there was a fire in his room, and his Woman and Children were heard walking about. We continued on the Watch until 7 O'Clock when the people went to their usual occupations, and myself and some of the Gentlemen lay down for an hour, Mr. Oxley being left in charge of the morning Watch. A few minutes after we had gone to our Rooms, two of the servants went to the Lake for a Bucket of Water, on their return a N.W. man asked if Mr. McGillivray had joined in the dance, he was answered in the affirmative, the N.W. man rejoined 'well then he danced with us too and we have taken

care of him.' On the return of our people with the Water, December
they mentioned the circumstances to Mr. Oxley, who immediately went into the Prisoners Room and discovered that 1820
he had made his escape!!! His woman was interrogated on the subject and at first stated that he got out through the Chimney, it was examined and found too small to admit his body; the Stockades were then inspected particularly but no tracks discovered, and had he scaled them the impression of his Feet and hands must have appeared: suspicion at length fell on Knipe the man who attended him and he was secured while I examined the Woman. She with much hesitation confessed that McGillivray had bribed the man and that he was conducted out by him between the hours of 8 & 9 O'Clock last night; that the plan had been concerted several Days, but they had no opportunity of carrying it into effect until last Night when Knipe opened the Door and said to Mr. McGillivray 'if you promise faithfully to meet me in Montreal and keep your word I shall now permit you to escape as the Night is dark and there are no people moving about the Fort': Mr. McGillivray gave his hand and assured him on his honor that he might depend on his promise; he then took leave of the Woman and desired her to remain quiet until Morning as he was now liberated, he then accompanied Knipe who locked the door upon her.

I have examined Knipe very particularly on the subject but he denies all knowledge thereof, his countenance and manner however betray evident proofs of his guilt, he has been interrogated in English, French, Italian and Spanish, languages in which he is tolerably conversant (having been a Soldier in the late De Meuron Regt.¹) but pretends that he does not understand the questions and regrets that we cannot put them to him in German; I however feel perfectly satisfied that the Woman's statement is correct and that he got out by the side Gate from the Wood yard as there is a track from thence round the Stockades to the North West Houses. I was rather surprised

¹ As De Meuron's Regiment was composed mainly of Swiss and German mercenaries these languages, Spanish excepted, would have been familiar to most of its members.

December that Knipe did not escape with McGillivray but on looking at
 1820 his account it appears that there is a Balance of nearly 2000 Livres due to him and it is probable that he intends serving his time out in hopes of getting his Balance paid up and afterwards going to Canada; I must however compare notes with the Governor on this subject as such a mercenary wretch might by perjury endanger our Lives in a Canadian Court of Law.

About ten O'Clock A.M. two N.W. men called for McGillivray's clothes, which were delivered; one of the men St. Piquè says that McGillivray arrived at the Watch House, between the hours of 8 & 9 last night without his Coat, that he told them he had made his escape by personating his woman in her Gown and that he had got over the Stockades behind the Smith's shop; that however cannot be the case as the snow is not disturbed and the story is no doubt fabricated for the purpose of removing suspicion from Knipe. The prisoner has been watched with so much vigilance ever since he came into the Fort that I am satisfied he could not have got away except through treachery; he was certainly allowed the range of the Fort on his parole of honor, but that was scarcely looked upon as a collateral security with Locks & Keys.

5th, Tuesday: Fine clear weather. Dispatched six trains with Chaurit and the Indian for meat to the Hunters, who are six days march from hence; it is very inconvenient to send such a distance and I have directed Chaurit to bring the Hunters to the neighbourhood of Lac Clear ¹ where there are generally a number of Buffaloe at this season of the year. Sent four trains to the Old Fort for Fish. In consequence of the scarcity of Dogs nearly the whole of our people are employed in fishing and hauling provisions, in this respect the N.W. have a great advantage over us as they have about twenty trains independent of those belonging to their people, so that with two or three
 [fo. 69] men they can furnish their establishments with as much fish and animal food as they require. Our people about the Fort employed cutting Fire wood, making trains &c.

6th, Wednesday: Severe frost and very cold. The small

¹ Possibly Churchill Lake, cf. *supra*, p. 34, n. 2: more probably Lake Claire, a western extension of Lake Athabaska.

House outside the Fort, has been hitherto unoccupied, and I December
 conceive it necessary that some person should reside there for 1820
 the purpose of watching the North West and receiving Indians
 if they arrive in the night; I have therefore set two men to
 repair it and Lamallice's Family are to take possession thereof
 in the course of a few days. Received a supply of Fish from
 the Old Fort. Frazer¹ the N.W. Clerk who had charge at
 Fond du Lac has changed places with Wilburner, and come
 over to the Watch House to day of which I understand he takes
 charge as Mr. McGillivray is not inclined to trust himself
 again in our neighbourhood.

7th, Thursday: Fine clear weather. Sent two trains to the
 Old Fort and one to the Big Island for Fish, the rest of the
 people variously employed. Mr. Brown received a note from
 Mr. Keith in answer to one he wrote a few days ago relative to
 a dog belonging to us that had strayed to the N.W. Fishery last
 summer which he promises to deliver up. St. Picquè one of
 the N.W. bullies (a very civil man whose confidence I have
 gained) came over this morning with some meat in repayment
 of that given by Bouche a few days ago to their people when
 searching for Indians:—He appears very much dissatisfied
 with his situation says that his Masters are a set of Lawless
 Rascals and that he is determined to resist any illegal duty they
 may attempt to impose on him: he seems desirous to enter our
 service at the expiration of his contract and says that the greater
 number of the North West Servants are disaffected and
 anxious to change sides. He informs me that Keith dispatched
 expresses to Peace River, Isle ala Crosse and Fond du Lac on
 the arrest of Mr. McGillivray for a re-inforcement of men and
 that Joseph McGillivray² was expected from Vermillion to
 head a party in attacking our Fort in the Night time for the
 purpose of rescuing the Prisoner, but that two men were
 dispatched this morning to intimate his escape and counter-
 mand the former requisition. The N.W. people look upon
 Keith as a cool designing Villain who would incite them to the

¹ Cf. p. 36, n. 1.

² Son of the Hon. William McGillivray; brother to Simon. Cf. Appendix B.

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December most nefarious acts and blackest crimes, but has not the courage
1820 to lead them and is therefore despised by all about him. Wrote
the following Letters for Peace River which I intend sending
Express by Bouche and two men tomorrow morning, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *7th December*, 1820.

DUNCAN FINLAYSON, ESQRE., }
St. Marys. }

DR. SIR,

Your esteemed favour of 20th Octr. I had the pleasure of receiving on the 8th Ultimo by Mr. Vignau and I am happy to learn that your prospects are tolerably good. Had you been a little more communicative on many points it would have been obliging, but I am left to conjecture on almost every thing connected with the District: in this country we have not the same facilities as in England for correspondence and when an Express is sent at a heavy expense nearly the distance of a thousand miles it is not unreasonable to expect a full and particular detail of all circumstances connected with public business: Your dispatch consists of a small sized sheet of Post widely penned and a margin of about an inch, whereas there were eight or ten private letters closely written in your hand which no doubt gave a very accurate statement of the affairs of the District. Public business should not be introduced into private correspondence; had your request for Nails been made to me officially instead of being mentioned casually in Mr. Brown's Private Letter, the full quantity would have been furnished by this conveyance but I did not know that any were wanted until Mr. Brown accidentally mentioned it a few days ago therefore five hundred are all that can now be sent. You have done well in retaining Baptiste Bisson and the Fort Hunters and I trust there will be no scarcity of Provisions: Bisson must be indulged in order to secure his services for another year, if he wishes to visit the Depot it will be necessary to give him a passage. I hope you have finally settled with Gladeau the Freeman for all his provisions and I beg you will

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use every exertion to lay up an abundant stock both for New December
Caladonia and the passage out to Portage La Loche and back 1820
from this place to St. Mary's: previous to the departure of the
Brigade, let the Hunters come down the River and put animals
en cache for the maintenance of the people, as all the Provisions
embarked at St. Mary's I expect will be brought this length as
cargo. It is satisfactory to learn that your Indians are ~~OE~~conomically
equipped and gone to their hunting grounds contented,
I entertain sanguine hopes that they will make large returns
this season. The North West have been troublesome here and
Grignon the Officer found it necessary to apprehend Mr.
Simon McGillivray on the 23rd Octr.; he remained a prisoner
here until the night of the 3rd Inst. when he made his escape
by corrupting the man who had charge of him; 'tis probable
they may be inclined to revenge themselves on my person, and
if I went up to Peace River I have reason to believe that
McIntoch at Vermillion would find means either to dispatch
or give me quarters within his Stockades, by all accounts he
is not very ceremonious in such matters, I have therefore
determined on abandoning my intention of proceeding thither
this season, and I trust my absence will not be attended with
any serious injury to the Compys. affairs in that quarter.

The principal object of this communication is to learn the
fate of Mr. Giasson and his party who I trust have arrived in
safety; if they have not got to St. Mary's you will be good
enough to forward an Express without delay to Fort de Pin-
nette to make the necessary enquiries; if not there let Mr. Yale
use his utmost exertions to re-engage the Iroquois Guides,
Interpreters and Canoe men to proceed in Spring with Messrs.
Brown & Oxley; they will leave this place early in June if
these men can be secured, but in the event of any ac-
cident having happened to Mr. Giasson and that the Iroquois
will not proceed without him we must abandon the idea of
establishing New Caladonia next season. If Mr. Giasson is
returned have the goodness to re-engage him on moderate
terms, an advance for one year may be given of any sum
under One hundred Pounds, but I am in hopes that he will
renew his contract on the present terms, one hundred Pounds

December Halifax,¹ an advance of twenty to fifty Pounds may be given
 1820 for three years if he holds out, but I think he will not be unreasonable in his demands, you must however make the best bargain in your Power with him.

[fo. 70] Pray let me have a full and explicit detail of every thing worthy of remark in his Travels, let his journal be forwarded and get his ideas as to our prospects, the state of the country, it's resources, the character of the Natives, and their feelings towards us, also how the N.W. stand in that quarter. The Wages of the Iroquois are high, but a trifling advance may be given to induce them to renew their Contracts for Two or Three years. I am most anxious about the party and fear some disaster has occurred to them; if they have not arrived at Fort de Pinnette we may calculate on their being lost and I must communicate with Governor Williams immediately thereon, you will therefore see the necessity of being very particular on the subject. I trust Mr. Yale is doing well at Fort de Pinnette, that Gentleman stands high in my opinion and you will re-engage him for three years if possible; an advance of ten Pounds may be given if you find it absolutely necessary; favor me with your ideas as to our prospects in that quarter, I shall write Mr. Yale a few lines which you may peruse and seal up. Let the best men be engaged without delay, a reduction of Wages is very desirable but real good men cannot be parted

¹ Halifax currency was a system of accountancy only; there were no coins in circulation to correspond with it. The most important coins in circulation in Upper and Lower Canada in the early nineteenth century were the Spanish dollar and the old French livre and sou.

Many attempts were made to correlate these and other coins, and from 1796 onwards the dollar was equivalent to five shillings, Halifax (*i.e.* four dollars were equal to a pound, Halifax), whilst six livres, French money, were equivalent to five shillings, Halifax, or one dollar. The sterling guinea was equivalent to one pound, three shillings and fourpence, Halifax, or to twenty-eight livres, French currency. Simpson was in error (p. 321) in reckoning out his account in French currency at twenty-eight livres to the guinea and calling his currency "Halifax".

In addition to Halifax and French currency, "York currency" was in use amongst Montreal and other merchants until 1821, when legal disabilities drove the system out of use. In this system (derived from the practice at New York) the dollar was equivalent to eight shillings, so that a York shilling was only equal to sevenpence-halfpenny, Halifax.

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with even on their present terms; if any reduction can be made, let all their contracts be renewed for 1, 2, or 3 years, say nothing about fines until we reach the Depot, but keep a particular memorandum of every improper action. Any man who goes to the Depot in hopes of a further advance shall have a passage to Montreal. If you find Mr. Thomas's services important, and that the summer charge can be safely entrusted to him, he may be re-engaged for three years; I understand he expects an advance, it must not exceed twenty Pounds: If he determines on going out let him clearly understand that there is no chance of his being re-engaged below as we cannot give him and his numerous Family a passage. Mr. Bourassa I believe has another year to serve; in the event of Mr. Thomas's not re-engaging, Mr. Yale will take charge of St. Marys during the summer and Mr. Bourassa of Fort de Pinnette. I shall write to Mr. Laronde by this conveyance, and if he declines remaining at Colville House on his present terms, I shall send a Gentleman from hence in Spring to relieve him. We are much in want of dogs here, I have therefore to request that you will send by the return Express three or four good Trains if they can be spared, when you send to Edmonton ask Mr. Heron to purchase about twenty good Dogs, as many breeding Bitches among them as possible and let them be brought here by the Canoes in Spring. Pray keep Magnion at work raising bark and providing gum & wattappe as I shall expect fourteen New Canoes in Spring and let each canoe have abundance of materials for repairs during the voyage. Renew Magnion's engagement for two or three years if possible as he is a valuable man: I understand Mr. Lewis has been tampering with him, but if he does not return to Peace River he must go to Montreal. Have the goodness to provide a quantity of large Babiche for Pack Lines and all the Parchment Skins and dressed Leather you can trade, for New Caladonia, as I am uncertain about the supplies from Edmonton by Isle ala Crosse. We require two Horses for this place, you will therefore send Capn.¹ the Iroquois with them on a Raft at the opening of the navigation say two or three days after the ice breaks. Do me

¹ An Indian employed by the H.B.C, and residing in the Peace River District.

December the favor to ask Magnion to build a good Light Canoe for my
 1820 voyage out, let her be a Racer as I am desirous to get early to
 Cumberland; Charlo the Guide and Grand Michel the Half
 Negro are to be my Bow and Steersmen, and must bring down
 the canoe by the first open water, at Colville House Paul¹ &
 Prevost will join them and I shall expect them here by the
 20th May. You have put us to much inconvenience by
 neglecting to forward the Accounts, have the goodness to send
 them by the Express. I am anxious to know the amount of
 your Horticultural returns and will feel obliged by your
 bringing a few seed Potatoes here in Spring: Let the Gentle-
 man in charge during the summer attend particularly to the
 Gardens. I hope the Brigade will be ready to start from St.
 Mary's between the 12th and 15th of May, and I shall wait
 for you here until the 22nd, it will be necessary for you to
 remain until all the Canoes take their departure from hence.
 Let the packs be made up to 80 lbs each, and favor me with a
 memorandum of the Goods on hand, also the quantity sent to
 Fort de Pinnette. Ten of the Iroquois intended for New
 Caladonia must come here with the Brigade in two Canoes, to
 return immediately with Messrs. Brown & Oxley. This is
 forwarded to Colvile House by two of our people; I shall
 direct Mr. Laronde to send it on immediately and you will be
 pleased to dispatch an Express without delay to Fort de Pin-
 nette with instructions that he is not to be detained there more
 than one night; on his return let the dispatch be forwarded
 from St. Mary's without delay as also from Colvile House and
 I shall expect to have the pleasure of hearing from you by the
 1st of February. Favor me with a report of the District and
 let me know particularly what our Opponents are about. If
 my presence is absolutely required at St. Mary's I shall take
 all chances and start from hence immediately on receipt of your
 Letters, or if Mr. Miles can be of any material service, he will
 proceed without delay. Mr. Grignon left this place on the 1st
 Inst. with Dispatches for Cumberland and I expect him from
 Isle à la Crosse with the fall packet in the early part of next
 month. If I do not find it necessary to go to Peace River I

¹ See Appendix B, Frinque.

LETTER TO CHARLES THOMAS 189

shall have the pleasure of addressing you again soon after the receipt of your Letters, but should any accident prevent you from hearing from me, you will go on with your summer arrangements and come out as early as possible. Eight men and the Officers I conceive will be sufficient for St. Mary's: Lafrenier & Maroi to be employed in raising Bark & building Canoes for New Caladonia. Three men: an Interpreter with the Gentleman in charge will be sufficient for Fort de Pinnette, and two men, an Interpreter and the Gentleman in charge for Colville House. No Gentlemen or Interpreters to come out with the Brigade if they have any intention of returning, also no women or children. Have the goodness to bring me a Bag of fine soft Berry Pemican and a few tongues for the Voyage out. If Harper is returned from the Mountain let him bring the Despatches. I remain with esteem

Dear Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 7th Decr., 1820.

MR. CHARLES THOMAS, }
St. Mary's. }

SIR,

I am favored with your esteemed Letter of 19th Octr. and feel perfectly satisfied that your assistance, experience, and advice, will be of the most essential importance to Mr. Finlayson who seems to appreciate your services very highly. Considering the limited means that were at your disposal I think you have done wonders during the summer and I trust that the Post will never be left in such a destitute state again. Your contract I understand expires next season and have authorised Mr. Finlayson to renew it which I trust you can have no objections to do as it would be with much reluctance I should part (now that the heat of opposition is over)¹ with a Gentleman who is so deeply interested in the Welfare of his Employers.—

I remain, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

¹ Cf. Simpson's attitude to Thomas, pp. 40-41, 44, 104, 131, 274, 279, 287.

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FORT WEDDERBURN, *7th December*, 1820.

MR. J. M. YALE, }
Fort de Pinnette. }

SIR,

Altho I have not the pleasure of being personally acquainted with you, I am not ignorant of the high character you bear and the zealous interest you have always taken in the affairs of the Honble. H.B. Coy. and I congratulate myself on having a Gentleman of your worth in charge of Fort de Pinnette, where I have every reason to suppose you have met with a warm opposition; the injuries which the N.W. have heaped upon you were borne with unconquerable fortitude¹ and it must be a great consolation to know that their Tyrannical and Despotic career is brought to a crisis and that they are now on the verge of destruction; another year or two must complete their downfall and I am satisfied that you will not hesitate to render your best exertions in it's accomplishment, and as your contract expires next season, I have authorised Mr. Finlayson to renew it for any term you may be pleased to name but I hope not less than three Years. Here the Opposition is nearly terminated, Messrs. Keith & Simon McGillivray did exhibit hostile intentions on my first arrival, but the capture of the latter Gentleman by Mr. Grignon the Officer damped their temerity, he continued a prisoner here from the 23rd Octr. until the night of the 3rd Inst., when he made his escape by bribing the watch who had charge of him, an act that does not reflect much honor to him, but we all know that that virtue is incompatible with a North Wester.

I am anxious to know your success at Fort de Pinnette, if you have but fair play there is not the smallest doubt of your doing well, and the number of Packs will I trust bear conclusive evidence of your unremitting exertions. It was my intention to have visited Peace River this Winter, but I now find that my presence in this quarter is necessary and must therefore

¹ Yale was made a prisoner by the N.W.C. at Fort Chipewyan on 2nd April, 1817, and conveyed to Great Slave Lake and there detained until the following September, when he was released.

postpone it until next year. Mr. Giasson and his party are I December
trust with you; when Mr. Finlayson wrote he had no accounts 1820
of them and the principal object of this express is to obtain
some information regarding them: if that Gentleman is arrived
I hope he will be ready to accompany Messrs. Brown & Oxley
across the Mountain next Spring, the party will be formidable
and well equipped: ask him to have the goodness to re-engage
the Iroquois Guides, Interpreters, and Canoe men for that
mission, and to favor me with his Journal and all the information
he has collected in regard to the Trade, Natives, Country, and
it's resources, the points he recommends being established, the
strength of the N.W. and in short whatever he conceives may
be interesting. Should Mr. Giasson not have arrived, you will
endeavour to secure those people as the Expedition cannot
proceed without them, and you will make the best terms in
your power. Do me the favor also to re-engage the Canadian
Voyageurs on the most Economical terms, no advance can
be given on the present Wages, and none except the best
men to be taken on these terms, but if they will submit to
any reduction the whole may be engaged. In the event of
your being desirous to see Mr. Finlayson in Spring, Mr.
Giasson (if with you) will take charge of the Post until
your return. Three men and an Interpreter with yourself
will I conceive be sufficient for the summer Establishment,
the rest of the people to get as early as possible to St. Mary's,
and bring with them all the provisions you make which I
expect will be considerable; the Packs to be made up to 80 lbs
each.

Pray be careful of your Provisions as the New Caladonia
Expedition will require a considerable supply, and you will
trade all the Parchment skins, dressed Leather and Large
Babiche you can find for that destination. In case you have
no Canoe maker have the goodness to provide Gum, bark &
wattappe for five Canoes which you will send to St. Mary's in
Spring for New Caladonia, and in the course of the season let
six Kegs Gum and a quantity of Wattappe be provided for the
Canoes going in with Messrs. Brown, Oxley & Giasson. Pray
do not detain the Express longer than is absolutely necessary,

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December and let me have the pleasure of hearing from you fully and
1820 particularly.—I remain, Sir,

Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, *7th December*, 1820.

MR. L. D. LARONDE, }
Colvile House. }

SIR,

I am favored with Mr. McBean's communication of 27th Octr. and it affords me much satisfaction to learn that you found the affairs of Colvile House in a prosperous state and I entertain sanguine hopes that the returns will bear ample proof of your talent as an Indian Trader. I highly approve of your having established the Fishery at Loon Lake, it will save a great quantity of Provisions and it is of the utmost consequence that a large stock is secured as I depend on a considerable supply from your Post for the Brigade in Spring to Portage La Loche, and from hence in the fall to Peace River, also for the New Caladonia Expedition: for the latter District you will trade all the Parchment skins, Dressed Leather and large Babiche for Pack cords you can procure. I am anxious to know if you have sent to Hay's River and what has been done there; if you see any Indians from that quarter, have the goodness to inform them that we mean to establish it next year and let them reserve all their Furs and provisions for us, say that they will be handsomely treated and that the North West are now completely broken down. Circumstances have occurred here since I had the pleasure of seeing you which in all probability will prevent my visiting Peace River this Winter; the Spring and summer arrangements must therefore be left entirely to your own and Mr. Finlayson's judgement, and I trust that my absence will be attended with no material inconvenience to the service. Have the goodness to re-engage all your men for 1, 2, or 3 years without delay, or [sic] their present terms, a trifling advance may be given to the best if [fo. 72] necessary as their Wages are materially lower than those

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engaged at the Depot last year, but that advance must not exceed one hundred Livres for Middlemen and two hundred for Boutes, you will however give no increase if it can possibly be avoided. The Brigade will require six Kegs of Gum and a quantity of Watappe from your Post which you will be pleased to collect, and previous to the arrival of the Canoes, you will send two or three Hunters below the Chutes¹ to put animals *en c  che* for the maintenance of the Brigade on their passage hither as I expect that all their provisions will be brought here as Cargo. Grand Michel & Charlo the Guide will precede the Brigade with my Light Canoe and you will have the goodness to send Paul & Prevost with them, let them come on with the utmost dispatch as I intend going out immediately the Navigation admits. I shall be glad if you renew your contract for two or three years on the same terms as the last, no increase can be given, and by the return of Bouche you will have the goodness to give me a final answer as it is absolutely necessary that my arrangements with the Officers should be finished without delay. Herewith I send a man Laderoute² to replace La Rance,³ who is gone to Isle ala Crosse, and you will immediately send him or some other person to St. Mary's with the accompanying dispatch; if Mr. McBean could be spared he would make an expeditious Journey, and perhaps you can find a Free Iroquois to accompany him; it is important that I should hear from Mr. Finlayson as early as possible and when the Express returns let him be forwarded without delay. By that conveyance you will be so good as write me fully on the state of your Post, prospects &c. I expect some trains of dogs by the return Express from St. Mary's and you will provide a few bags Pemican to send with them, not for the voyage but for the use of this Post as we have no other provisions than fish which do not answer for Derouinnes. Do me the favor to send

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¹ The 'Chutes' of Peace River, half a day's march from Colville house, now known as 'the Vermilion Chutes'.

² A servant of the H.B.C. His name does not appear either in the contemporary accounts of the Northern Department of the H.B.C. or in the list in Brown's Report on the Lake Athabaska district, 1820-21.

³ Cf. *supra*, p. 103, n. 1.

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December half a dozen skins dressed Leather by Bouche, and a bag or
1820 two of Pemican if they can be spared also a few bladders of
Grease. Let your packs be made up to 80 lbs each. As you
are not a proficient in the English Language have the goodness
to address me fully in French. Do not detain Bouche more
than two days and let his train be loaded. I remain

Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 7th December, 1820.

MR. W. S. McBEAN, }
Colvile House. }

SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your laconic communication of 27th Octr.; my previous request seems to have escaped your recollection or been misunderstood as instead of a full and particular statement of every thing worthy of remark, you have favoured me with a brief hurried note on a quarter sheet of paper. By this conveyance I send a packet for St. Marys which I request may be forwarded without delay, and if you can be spared from Colvile House, I should be glad if you would take charge of it, as in that case I could depend on having an early reply thereto. By return of Bouche (who only requires two days for repose at your place) favor me with a report of the Post, and let me know the state of your store, quantity of furs and provisions on hand, prospects as to returns, state of the Fishery, and result of the visit to Hays River, in short every thing worthy of notice. You will be good enough to hold yourself in readiness to cross the Mountain in Spring with Messrs. Brown, Oxley, Giasson and a formidable party. Our fall packet is not yet arrived from Isle ala Crosse. Mr. Brown will give you all the News of this place and with best wishes, I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEORGE SIMPSON.

LETTER TO HERON

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FORT WEDDERBURN, *7th December*, 1820.December
1820FRANCIS HERON, ESQRE., }
Edmonton House. }

DR. SIR,

I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 26th Septemr. to which I beg reference and from your wonted attention to business and obliging habits I depend on the requests therein contained being complied with. We are half starving here, having no dogs to haul either Fish or Meat; by the return of Mr. Finlayson's people I have therefore to request the favor of your sending Twenty good dogs for the use of this place, a considerable proportion of them fine breeding Bitches which are to be charged to Athabasca Lake District. I understand a strong band of free Iroquois from the Columbia have joined you lately, have the goodness to inform them that we mean to establish New Caladonia next season, they may be of the utmost importance to us in that quarter. Mr. Giasson and his party had not returned from the Mountain up to the 20th Octr., and I am apprehensive that some misfortune has occurred to them; unless they soon make their appearance our Iroquois will not proceed and the Expedition must probably be delayed another year: in that case you could in all likelihood prevail on those who have lately joined you, to conduct and introduce us to the Natives; if by this conveyance you learn from Mr. Finlayson that Mr. Giasson is still absent, it would be very desirable to get them to accompany you to Norway House, and Govr. Williams will no doubt make an arrangement with them to bring our Brigade in this fall via Peace River; Messrs. Brown & Oxley are to lead the party and it will be a sad disappointment if we cannot establish that valuable country next year. Mr. Miles will give you all the news of this place and with esteem, I remain,

Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

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FORT WEDDERBURN, 7th December, 1820.

DUNCAN FINLAYSON, ESQRE., }
St. Mary's. }

DEAR SIR,

Since closing my Letter of this date, it occurs to me that a large band of Free Iroquois from the Columbia joined Mr. Heron last year, and if Mr. Giasson is still absent, and that the Iroquois intended for New Caladonia do not renew their Engagements I think Mr. Heron will be able to persuade those people, to conduct and introduce us to the Natives: enclosed you will receive a Letter for Mr. Heron on the subject which is left open for your perusal and you will be good enough to give him all the information you collect thereon so as to regulate his negotiations with them. Let me know by the return Express what goods you expect to reserve for that destination after supplying the Peace River District and laying aside a moderate stock for the summer Trade: the Pieces taken from hence this fall for that Expedition must be held sacred as our Stores are quite empty and no assistance can be expected from us in Spring. Apply to Mr. Heron for 12 or 1500 Nails. Believe me to be, Dear Sir, Yours truly,

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

[fo. 73] 8th, Friday: Fine clear weather and severe frost. Bouche and two men started before day light for Colvile House with the Peace River Express, he is considered one of the best pedestrians in the North, and I have given him twenty days to accomplish the Journey out and home.¹ Received three trains fish from the Old Fort and Big Island. Our people about the Fort employed as usual in cutting firewood, sawing, plastering &c. &c.

9th, Saturday: The weather very cold with drift and snow. Sent four trains to the Old Fort for Fish. Mr. Brown received an impertinent note to day from Mr. Keith relative to the dog which we claim, and if it is not delivered up in the course of a few days, I have determined on seizing or shooting some of the

¹ The entire distance to be covered was to be about 230 miles.

N.W. Dogs, I think they can afford to spare in the proportion of 6 to 1. The English Chief is arrived, he has been very unfortunate, killed nothing and himself and family are starving. The latter were unable to come on for want of provisions and he returns for them Tomorrow with a few fish, for their maintenance hither. This Indian has for some years past been considered one of the best hunters of the Tribe, but I fear will do no good this season; it is an unfortunate characteristic of the Chipewyans, that if unsuccessful for any length of time in the early part of the season, their superstitions gain such an ascendancy over them, and they become so fully impressed with the idea that some evil genius haunts them, that they give themselves up entirely to despair; they become careless, neglect their hunts, lay dormant in their encampments for weeks together, while a morsel of Leather or Babiche remains to keep them in existence, at length to escape the miseries of famine, they murder their Families and perish without a single exertion. Whole bands of these poor wretches are annually consigned to oblivion in this melancholy way; when in this situation they are deaf to all argument and entreaty. As there are few people at the Fort to Night I have given the men who were employed at the Bastion a dance according to promise.

10th, Sunday : The weather continues very severe; blowing hard and a considerable fall of snow. The English Chief gone with a few fish to meet his Family.

11th, Monday : A great deal of snow fell in the course of last night and the weather is if possible worse than yesterday; so much so that I fear our Expresses and the people sent for meat are confined to their encampments. Received a very seasonable supply of Fish from the Old Fort as our Stock was quite exhausted yesterday. Mr. Keith has at length been pleased to give directions for the delivery of the dog we claim, it is done with a bad grace and evidently out of fear that we should repay ourselves in kind.

12th, Tuesday : The weather as yesterday and the frost intense, we have no Thermometer but it is supposed that the cold must be to day about 40 degrees below the 0. The ice on the Lake is about three feet thick. Sent three Trains to the

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December 1820 Old Fort for fish; three men employed repairing our Watch House, the others variously occupied. The English Chief and his Family arrived; they are unwelcome visitors at present as our stock of provisions is very limited.

13th, Wednesday: Clear weather and sufficiently bracing. Received a supply of Fish from the Big Island. Adams the man who had the accident on the 29th Octr. is now so far recovered as to furnish the Fishery with firewood, but unable to walk any distance which is unfortunate, as we calculated on him as one of our best runners, but I fear his services will in a great measure be lost this season. Mr. Chastellain is very unwell and confined to Bed, this Gentleman has the only sinecure about the place, Mr. Oxley excepted, he was quite worn out in the N.W. service and I would recommend his being discharged at the expiration of his present contract as he is totally useless and has an extravagant Salary.

14th, Thursday: Our people made an attempt to get to the Fishery this morning but were compelled to return on account of the cold, several of the dogs are frost bitten and many of the people have what is called 'The Company's mark'; Frozen noses. We are again under the necessity of having recourse to our Flour as the people are unable to haul a sufficient quantity of fish for regular consumption; our stock of the former invaluable article is now reduced to about 150 lbs.

15th, Friday: The weather unusually mild and warm. Sent two Trains for fish to the Old Fort and three men to procure timber for Sleds and Snow Shoes. Knipe gone to supply the Big Island Fishery with Firewood, he can do us less mischief there than here if that way inclined. The English Chief is to make another attempt to retrieve his misfortunes, he starts tomorrow and still hopes to make a good Hunt. The men about the Fort employed in cutting & hauling fire wood, mudding Houses &c. &c. The aurora borealis remarkably vivid to night and two circles intersecting each other in the Heavens exhibiting all the colours of the Rain bow were extremely brilliant and visible for about an hour.

16th, Saturday: Fine mild weather. The English Chief and his family have taken their departure accompanied by Martin.

Received a supply of Fish from the Old Fort, Taite the Orkneyman who has charge of that fishery is most active and industrious, he has about 7000 in Store and now taking altho' late in the season about 300 p diem. The Orkney men as far as I have been able to remark are better Fishermen than Canadians, and should therefore be generally employed in that capacity; we require twenty of these men at least in this Department. December 1820

17th, Sunday: Neil McDonald and a Canadian arrived this morning with Letters from Mr. MacVicar at Gt. Slave Lake up to the 4th Inst.; the accounts from thence are very satisfactory, Mr. McVicar had equiped 22 excellent Beaver Hunters on Economical terms and sent them away contented; his Opponents have been very prodigal but the Indians have lost all confidence in them, and if we had an abundant stock of goods to supply their wants, they would immediately join us in a body. In the early part of the summer 40 Indians who had joined our cause, finding that we had no ammunition to give them went to their Lands; they are expected at Slave Lake in the course of the winter, and if Mr. McVicar has the means of supplying their immediate wants, he is sure of their hunts, some of his people are gone to meet them. Mr. McVicar has exhibited a very deep and lively interest in the welfare of the Compys. business, in the summer he made very judicious and important arrangements for establishing McKenzie's River; he found means to open a communication with the Slave Indians; Forty families of whom came to Gt. Slave Lake and remained in it's vicinity upwards of Two months until his last charge of ammunition was expended, in hopes that our canoes for that destination would arrive, and were at last reluctantly compelled to go to the N.W. establishment at Rivierre au l'Orr; he had moreover secured upwards of 1000 [fo. 74] lbs of dried Provisions and two excellent Fort Hunters for the party which would have guarded against all risk of Starvation; it is deeply to be regretted that so favorable an opportunity of establishing that valuable country has been neglected; the Natives are most anxious for our appearance amongst them, and there is no doubt but we should have a large proportion of

December the Trade even the first year the Compys. standard is hoisted in
1820 that country.

Mr. McVicar is under very serious apprehensions of the miseries of Famine, and were it not for the provisions he reserved for the use of the McKenzie River Expedition, he must have abandoned the Post; this misfortune has arisen from the failure of his Fishery; at Gt. Slave Lake they depend almost entirely for subsistence on the Fall Fishery which is early: his old nets were worn out in the course of the summer, he had no twine until the arrival of the Canoes which was too late to work nets for the present season, and the consequence has been that the fishery was over before he had a net in readiness to put into the water; to obviate this evil in future it is necessary that there should always be a years stock of Twine on hand at Gt. Slave Lake, indeed this does not particularly apply to Slave Lake but to all Posts in Athabasca Department. The Slave Lake Fort Hunters had not killed an animal at the time Mr. McVicar wrote, and he has nothing to expect from that quarter as their Relatives have taken it into their heads that they are soon to enter upon a pilgrimage to the other World, and according to their superstitious ideas it is necessary that they should prepare for such an awfull peregrination by fasting and idleness. The N.W. Coys. Hunters are infected with the same mania, but they have an abundant stock of fish laid up. Mr. McVicar requires a supply of Ammunition, Rum & Tobacco early in Spring, but I fear we shall not be able to give him any relief unless Mr. Clarke complies with my request; he wants some cloth by the return Express but we have not a yard to spare:—He has got his men into excellent discipline, and to use his own words ‘every one of them striving to out do the other in advancing every duty required of them.’ He has established a small Post at Stoney Island for the purpose of intercepting the N.W. Indians, the charge of which is given to Masta the Interpreter. Mr. McAulay has been most useful to him and if they do but exist during the Winter we have favorable prospects from Gt. Slave Lake.

I now feel it my duty in this public manner to throw some light on the character of Mr. McVicar, which appears to me

to have been most unjustly calumniated; I have heard several contradictory reports of him, and have weighed them seriously and dispassionately in my own mind and altho' I am personally unacquainted with that Gentleman, the result is that I conceive him to be as honorable, active, brave, and zealous a Servant as any in the employ; in Opposition and as an Indian Trader there is not his Fellow in Athabasca, and every charge brought against him (as I learn) when sifted has reflected nothing in the shape of disgrace. He agrees to remain in the Service but I suspect it will be necessary to advance his Salary to £150, this increase is not unreasonable as the future privileges of a District Master are not guaranteed to him. Received a Letter from Mr. McAulay, he is willing to renew his contract for 3 years at £130 with the full allowances and priveleges of a District Master.

18th, Monday: Fine clear sharp weather. The people employed in cutting and hauling firewood, making trains, repairing Houses &c. I had an interview with St. Picquè the N.W. Bully to day, who informs me that Joseph McGillivray arrived from Vermillion a few days ago for the purpose of rescuing his Brother Simon, but finding him liberated, returns tomorrow; also that Black (of Villainous celebrity) is at Vermillion and expected here about the latter end of the month with a considerable force; a strong party are likewise expected from Isle à la Crosse; on the arrival of those people the N.W. have determined on making a grand effort to apprehend me and some of our principal Officers; when the plan is ripe for execution this faithful servant is to give me the necessary information.

19th, Tuesday: Our people employed as yesterday. Sent two Trains to the Big Island for Fish and received two from the Old Fort. Delonee & St. Denis returned after an ineffectual search of three days for Sled Timber. The moon has been visible for the last 24 hours. The weather extremely cold and the Frost so intense that while sitting within 4 feet of a large fire the Ink actually freezes in my pen. McDonald from Slave Lake had an interview with McVicar¹ a N.W. Clerk and

¹ I.e. Walter McVicar. Cf. Appendix B.

December Brother to our Mr. McVicar; this young man came from Isla
 1820 (one of the Hebrides) to Canada for the express purpose of
 joining his Brother in this country and offered his services to
 the Company's Agents in Montreal on any terms, but was
 rejected, he then proposed to serve one year Gratis if they would
 allow him to work his passage to the Interior in our Brigade,
 but that was also refused, at length through extreme poverty he
 was under the disagreeable necessity of presenting himself to
 the N.W. Coy. who at once engaged him for a term of three
 years at £50 p annum. His Brother is sadly mortified at the
 circumstance as he has for very substantial reasons a cordial
 antipathy to our Opponents.

20th, Wednesday: The weather continues intensely cold.
 Sent three Trains for fish to the Old Fort. The six trains that
 started for meat on the 6th Instant returned with about 1000
 lbs Wt., it is dearly bought as our people have been away 16
 days and the consumption of Fish on such Voyages is very
 great. If the Fort Hunters cannot be prevailed on to come
 nearer the House we must content ourselves with Whitefish as
 in the present state of affairs we cannot dispense with the
 services of our men & dogs for such a length of time.

21st, Thursday: Sent Four trains to the Old Fort. The
 Watch House is now thoroughly repaired and Lamallice's
 family have taken possession thereof. Four Trains fish arrived
 from the Old Fort. The weather as yesterday.

22nd, Friday: The men preparing Timber for roofing &
 flooring the Bastions. Sent three Trains to the Old Fort. The
 severity of the weather increases.

23rd, Saturday: Wind East and bitterly cold with snow.
 Received Ten Trains fish from the Old Fort. Our fishermen
 are preparing to remove their Nets to the Big Island as the
 Old Fort Fishery scarcely produces sufficient for their main-
 tenance. The English Chief is still unsuccessfull; his Family
 returned to the Fishery yesterday and he is desirous to remain
 [fo. 75] there, but I have given positive orders that he departs in the
 course of a day or two as we cannot support them without
 exposing ourselves to the risk of Starvation; Sent him a supply
 of ammunition, hooks and lines and recommended his going

to Point de Roche¹ where there is a good Trout fishery. St. December
 Picquè directed one of our men to inform me that the North 1820
 West Express from Isle ala Crosse is arrived, and that Mr.
 Clarke has had a very serious misunderstanding with his
 Opponents; that he took a Clerk and eight men prisoners but
 that they had made their escape; also that one of our Gentle-
 men and a N.W. Clerk had fought a duel and the former
 severely wounded.²

24th, Sunday: The weather as yesterday. Sent three men
 to repair the Orkney fishermen's House at the Big Island, and
 six trains to the Old Fort.

25th, Monday: This being Xmas day the people had a dram
 in the morning and were allowed to make holyday. The
 Gentlemen sat down to the most sumptuous Dinner that Fort
 Wedderburn could afford, true English fare, Roast beef &
 plum pudding and afterwards a temperate Kettle of Punch.
 McGillivray paid his Friends at the Watch house a visit for
 about half an hour; they seem to muster unusually strong and
 I have directed a guard to be kept to night. The weather
 bitterly cold.

26th, Tuesday: Received six trains from the Old Fort, and
 two from the Big Island. The people employed in sawing
 Timber, cutting Fire wood &c. &c. The weather continues
 severe.

27th, Wednesday: Sent eight trains to the Old Fort. The
 people employed as yesterday.

28th, Thursday: The weather remarkably mild to day.
 Received five trains fish from the Old Fort. The Fishermen
 removing their nets to the Big Island. Four men employed in
 making doors, ladders &c. for the Bastions; from the informa-
 tion St. Picquè has given me, I think we cannot be over cautious,
 and altho' some of the preparatory arrangements now making

¹ Probably the 'Big Point' below Bustard Island. Cf. *infra*, p. 288, n. 1.

² A duel was fought at Deer's Lake on 29th September, 1820, between Hugh Leslie the district master in charge of the H.B.C. post at Deer's Lake and James Heron the official in charge of the N.W.C. post there in which Leslie was wounded. For accounts of this duel cf. Leslie's post journal, now MS. H.B.C. B/179/a/14, fo. 6, and Davidson, *The North West Company*, p. 302.

December are troublesome, I am determined to be in readiness for active
 1820 and decided operations in the event of our Friends at Fort Chipewyan attempting hostile measures. The detention of the people sent to Isle ala Crosse in the Fall has put this District to the most serious inconvenience, and I fear will materially injure the Trade: it is to be hoped that Mr. Clarke will explain this business satisfactorily.

29th, Friday : Four men started this morning for the fishery, but could not proceed on account of the severity of the weather: our English Hatchets are so badly tempered that they do not stand the severity of the Frost, are as brittle as Glass: and we have not an oz of Steel to repair them with; those of Canadian manufacture are found to answer much better in this country. The people employed in laying up a stock of Firewood for the New Year holydays.

30th, Saturday : The weather mild to day. Sent four trains to the Fishery and directed all the men who could be spared from thence to come here Tomorrow.

31st, Sunday : This has been one of the most boisterous days we have had this season, it did not however prevent our people coming from the Fishery in order to enjoy the Festivities of Tomorrow for which all hands are busily employed making the necessary preparations.

January 1821

1st, Monday : The Festivities of the New Year commenced at four O'Clock this morning when the people honoured me with a salute of Fire arms, and in half an hour afterwards the whole Inmates of our Garrison assembled in the hall dressed out in their best clothes, and were regaled in a suitable manner with a few flaggon's Rum and some Cakes; a full allowance of Buffaloe meat was served out to them and a pint of Spirits for each man; the Women were also entertained to the utmost of our ability. In the course of the day St. Picquè & Rondeau¹ contrary to Mr. Keith's instructions paid us a visit, the object

¹ A N.W.C. fisherman, possibly Louis Rondeau, a Canadian who was in the N.W.C. service in the Athabaska district in 1819-20.

thereof was to guard me against a plan that the N.W. have in contemplation of apprehending me and the principal Officers of this establishment. St. Picquè has been ordered to beat and maltreat our people (being a powerful man) wherever he can find them, but has declined making himself conspicuous in that way, and is therefore looked upon with a jealous Eye: Black he says is expected in a few days, and is to commence open hostilities immediately on his arrival. Messrs. Keith and McGillivray, also Soucisse, are endeavouring to excite their people to attack our Fort, in short he assures me that our destruction is resolved upon without much delay. These men were treated with every attention, and took their departure about 8 O'Clock P.M. In the course of two or three hours afterwards St. Picque returned with the whole of his Baggage soliciting my protection; he informed me that on his arrival at Fort Chipewyan, Mr. McGillivray severely reprimanded him for visiting this Fort and ordered him out of doors, St. Picquè forthwith told him that as he had got his discharge he would immediately join us, and after giving the same intimation to Mr. Keith and Soucisse came away. I have some delicacy in harbouring this man as he is a contracted Servant of the N.W. Coy., but as he declares that he is brought into this country unwillingly for the specific purpose of committing outrage and violence upon us, and as the man has sufficient good sense to resist the lawless duty imposed on him, I feel justified in giving him our protection. The people have been enjoying themselves with a dance and seem much gratified by the attentions paid them.

2nd, Tuesday: Our people have been in a state of intoxication all day and very troublesome, it is however necessary to humour them at present as I am anxious to renew their engagements without delay; our Stock of Rum is now reduced to a very low ebb, which is unfortunate, as they seem inclined to part with a considerable proportion of their superfluous money. Mr. Back¹ of the Expedition arrived at Fort Chipewyan this morning from Gt. Slave Lake and paid me a visit in the course of the day. By him I have Letters from Lieut. Franklin Dated 18th Octr. & 28th Novr., also from Messrs.

¹ Afterwards Admiral Sir George Back. Cf. Appendix B.

January 1821 McVicar & McAulay dated 22nd Ultimo : Lieut. Franklin makes a demand of a supply of Goods which I am unable to comply with ; from Mr. McVicar he has got a quantity of Ammunition, Rum, Cloth and Tobacco, which I fear will materially injure our Trade at Gt. Slave Lake. Nothing worthy of remark has occurred at Gt. Slave Lake since Mr. [fo. 76] McVicar formally wrote me. The Expedition Gentlemen have taken up their Winter quarters, within a few days march of the Copper-mine River,¹ they entertain sanguine hopes of accomplishing the object of their mission in the course of next summer. The weather uncommonly mild for the season of the year.

3rd, Wednesday: I have been occupied the greater part of to day in engaging our people ; the Boutes hold out for 1700 Livres and the middlemen for 1300 Net with Equipments and I have found it necessary to secure some of our best men at these extravagant terms for one year ; last season they received extra goods amounting to a larger sum than what they are now fixed at ; if the number of men expected from Canada arrive in Spring the services of those unengaged may be dispensed with. About 8 O'Clock P.M. a N.W. man 'Thos. O'Hara' late a Serjt. in the Voltiguers came here on a visit to one of our people with whom he was previously acquainted ; he cautioned me privately to keep a good look out as the N.W. have determined on taking our Fort and securing me and all the Officers belonging to the establishment ; he is anxious to enter the Compys. service and I have informed him that at the expiration of his contract he will be engaged if his character is satisfactory, about ten O'Clock he took his departure. Lamallice has been visited by several of his Relations to day from the opposite Fort ; they inform him that Keith, McGillivray, & Soucisse have kept the people in a continual state of intoxication for several days, and have used every argument to induce them to attack us. They have engaged none of their Servants as yet and many of them seem determined on quitting the service.

4th, Thursday: About one O'Clock this morning, 'O'Hara'

¹ A river in the district of Mackenzie (N.W.T.), visited by Samuel Hearne in 1771. It flows into the Arctic Ocean in Coronation Gulf.

came to Lamallice's House with his baggage requesting our January
protection ; on his return to Fort Chipewyan last night, he 1821
was informed that McGillivray had determined on shooting
him and in order to avoid this summary mode of punishment,
he made up his mind to forfeit a Balance due to him by the
N.W. Coy. amounting to about £60 and take refuge here :
he is not a useful man and as it does not appear that he has
received any particular instructions to commit illegal violence
upon us, I do not feel justified in detaining him if he is claimed
by Mr. Keith. Recd. the following Letter from Mr. Back,
vizt. ;

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 3rd *Jany.*, 1821.

GEO. SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

Owing to the great disappointment, which the Expedition has experienced from the non-arrival of the articles intended for it's use, and also it's present necessitous situation ; I have to request that you will furnish me with the Goods mentioned in the enclosed List, or at least to the utmost of your power, as well as dogs & sleighs for their conveyance to Slave Lake, such things being indispensibly requisite for the future promotion of it's object.

I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEORGE BACK, R.N.

P.S.—A demand of the same nature will be sent to the N.W. that the list may be completed by both parties. You will oblige me by nominating what you can supply.

To which I made the following reply, vizt. :

FORT WEDDERBURN, 4th *Jany.*, 1821.

GEORGE BACK, ESQRE.

SIR,

I am favored with your Letter of this date requesting a supply of Goods for the use of the Expedition. In reply I regret that at present I am unable to comply with your demand, the few articles specified in the enclosed List excepted. Pursuant to the instructions of the Committee of the Honble.

January 1831 Hudson's Bay Coy., I am anxious to render every assistance in my power to facilitate the accomplishment of your arduous and important mission, and in conveying the five Pieces delivered to you at Gt. Slave Lake and the eight pieces delivered to the North West Coy. (agreeable to previous arrangement) at the Grand Rapid & Cumberland, the interests of the Coy. have already suffered materially. Any further assistance I may be enabled to render this season entirely depends on the arrival of supplies expected in a few weeks hence from a distant establishment, on this subject I shall be happy to communicate personally when you can favor me with an interview.—I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Mr. Back afterwards came over to dinner and remained all night: he seems much dissatisfied with the N.W. Coy. who have not rendered that assistance which the Expedition had reason to expect. I understand that Mr. Leith's excuse for not taking in the five pieces Goods delivered at the Grand Rapid, and the three pieces delivered at Cumberland was : that early in the season, they sent a Canoe from Lac La Pluie for the Express purpose of bringing in goods for the use of the Expedition ; that on it's arrival at Cumberland the Goods had not come to hand and therefore the Canoe proceeded on it's Route : I explained to Mr. Back that this excuse was merely trumped up for the purpose of deceiving them; that the N.W. knew well that none of our Canoes had arrived at the Depot and that the sole object of sending the Canoe alluded to was to give intimation to the Indians of Mr. Robertson's capture and to convey into Athabasca Soucisse and the prisoners who had been forcibly and unlawfully rescued from Spence the Contstable at the Grand Rapid : moreover that the N.W. had made no application for the goods in question. The weather very fine.

5th, Friday: The New Year holydays are at length terminated, and the people have resumed their several duties, vizt.: Two men gone to the Rivierre Embarras¹ for Sled Timber, Four

¹ The western fork of the Athabaska River, whereby it enters into Lake Athabaska. Cf. p. 39.

to the Big Island Fishery, Five to the Old Fort Fishery, Two January
hauling mud, one plastering, Four providing firewood and 1821
three Servants attending the Hall, cooking room &c. Received
the following Letters from Messrs. Keith & McGillivray,
vizt.:

FORT CHIPEWYAN, *5th Jan.*, 1821.

MR. GEO. SIMPSON, Manager, }
H.H.B. Coys. Affairs, Fort Wedderburn. }

SIR,

Being informed that Julian Tavurnur dit St. Peter and Thomas O'Hara, two of the North West Coys. engaged servants, have recently deserted their service, without any legitimate cause whatever, and have taken [refuge] in the Hudson's Bay Coys. Fort under your charge, you are hereby notified on the part of the said North West Coy., not to protect or harbour these men, and required to cause them to retire without the precincts of the Hudson's Bay Coys. Fort and protection. In complying with this demand you will evince a due regard to Justice as well as a formal agreement entered into and concluded between the two aforesaid Companies some years ago, and at the same time prevent any collisions which may here- [fo. 77]
after occur in consequence of a refusal to such an equitable and just demand. A reply to this address is expected without delay.—We are, Sir, Your Obedt. Servts.

(signed) GEO. KEITH.

SIMON MCGILLIVRAY, JUNR.

On receipt of this Letter had an interview with St. Picquè & O'Hara and wrote the following in reply, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *5th Jany.*, 1821.

MESSRS. KEITH & MCGILLIVRAY, }
Fort Chipewyan. }

GENTLEMEN,

I have communicated the substance of your Letter of this date to O'Hara & Tavurnur dit St. Peter the men alluded to

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January and have advised them to return to their Duties at your estab-
 1821 lishment. The former assigns no good reason for having
 deserted the service and I believe has it in contemplation to
 return, but the latter positively declares that he will on no
 consideration rejoin the North West Coy., and if his statements
 are correct I am decidedly of opinion that his determination
 is perfectly justifiable. I am inclined to pay due respect to the
 agreement you mention, altho' the N.W. Coy. have in open
 dereliction thereof seduced the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coys
 Servants whenever an opportunity occurred. The men in
 question have received no encouragement from me to abandon
 their Service ; the laws of hospitality do not however permit
 me to turn them out of the Fort, yet I have no objection to
 your sending one Officer, or two men to communicate with
 them on the subject at any time you may appoint between the
 hours of 10 A.M. & 3 P.M.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Received the following Letter from Mr. Back of the Expn.,
 vizt.:

FORT CHIPEWYAN, *Jany. 5th*, 1821.

GEORGE SIMPSON, ESQRE., }
 Fort Wedderburn. }

SIR,

Your Letter of the 4th Inst., is now before me, and I
 regret deeply that you cannot supply the Expedition with the
 articles specified in the demand, without which I apprehend
 it's interests will be severely injured, insomuch that it may be a
 subject of consideration whether it can proceed farther than
 it's present situation under the gloomy and unexpected cir-
 cumstances which appear to surround it. That the Honble.
 H.B. Coy. has suffered some inconvenience from the nature
 of the Expedition in this Country, is a fact of which I have never
 doubted, and that the extent of their inconvenience will be duly
 appreciated by His Majesty's Governmt. is also a matter equally

evident. I sincerely hope you will not be disappointed in January
 your expectation of Goods, as Ammunition, Tobacco, & 1821
 Spirits are absolutely indispensable for the Expedition however
 trifling the quantity. To you, Sir, I need not enlarge farther
 on this point as I feel fully sensible your already acquired
 knowledge of the country will convince you of the incontro-
 vertible truth of the assertion. Permit me to return you my
 obligations for what articles you have stated, but as I still trust
 there will be a future addition I shall not express myself further
 than that of remaining,

Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. BACK, R.N.

6th, Saturday: Wind South, extremely mild with rain.
 Received five trains fish from the Big Island. We have no
 dried provisions for Voyaging nor Grease to make candles,
 I have therefore determined on sending Two Trains to Harri-
 sons House for a supply. Wrote Mr. Andries the following
 Letter:, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *6th January*, 1821.

MR. GEO. PETER ANDRIES,)
 Harrisons House.)

DEAR SIR,

Herewith I send two trains for a supply of provisions
 as we have not a pound of Dried meat or Grease at this place;
 you will therefore have the goodness to furnish as much as you
 can part with, and if you can without detriment to the affairs
 of the Post, send two of your people here with trains also
 Loaded it will render us an essential benefit : by the time they
 arrive it is probable we shall receive some goods from Isle à
 Crosse and by the return of your people I will send a supply of
 Rum and a few files.

If you have any dressed Leather or Babiche have the good-
 ness to send all you can spare, also two large felling Axes as we
 have none here except the small Trading Hatchets which are
 unfit for Timber cutting. If Dumain is not engaged let him
 be sent and any other man who has not renewed his Contract.

January I hope Mr. McDougald got safe down and makes himself
 1821 useful to you, he is a very zealous active Officer and cannot fail
 to be a valuable assistant. Have the goodness to write me
 fully in reply to this and my last communication, and do not
 detain the people more than two days as we are much in need
 of their services. Wishing you and Mr. McDougald many
 happy returns of the season, I remain, Dr. Sir,
 Your mo. Obedt. Servt.
 (signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

[fo. 78] *7th, Sunday:* The weather as warm as I ever recollect it in
 England at this season of the year ; Wind S.W. with light
 Showers of Rain. Sent two trains to the Fishery, and two to
 Harrisons House. Squint Eye the Fort Hunter,¹ accompanied
 by Delonee arrived this afternoon from the neighbourhood of
 Lac Clear in order to get a hatchet wound on his Leg cured ;
 he has made a tolerable hunt, having six Buffaloe *en cache* with-
 in three days march of the Fort.

8th, Monday: Wind Easterly and the weather mild. Sent
 four train to the Big Island for fish. O'Hara the N.W. man
 is totally useless, and altho' an old Soldier, does not show much
 blood, he has therefore by my advice written to Mr. Keith
 acknowledging his error and requesting permission to return.
 Mr. Back of the Expedition paid me a visit, he complains
 [that] the N.W. have disappointed the Expedition most
 seriously, and the non-fulfilment of their promise to bring in
 the pieces delivered from our Brigade at the Grand Rapid and
 Cumberland will in all probability detain them another year
 in the country. Chastellain & Lamallice I find are renewing
 their old practice of carrying on Private Trade with the Indians,
 as yet they confine themselves to Grease, their speculations
 may however extend to Furs if not checked, and I have given
 Chastellain notice that if I discover a single transaction of the
 kind on the part of any Officer or man in the Service, he shall

¹ An Indian engaged as Fort hunter to Fort Wedderburn. An Indian called
 'The Young Squint Eyes' is included in the list of Indians equipped at Fort
 Wedderburn, 1820-21, and may possibly have been the same person.

forfeit whatever money is due to him in the hands of the January
Company. 1821

9th, Tuesday: The weather continues remarkably mild with dense Fog: we did expect some trains from the Fishery, but I suspect the haze has been so thick that the people could not find their way through the Lake. In repairing the Flooring of Mr. Brown's room, a c  che of Iron Hoops, Beaver Traps, Hatchets &c, &c., were found underneath which will be most useful, also about 8 lbs of Gun Powder in the bottom of a Staved Keg ; the Room caught fire some weeks ago within two feet of the Powder and our escape was truly providential, this repository was no doubt made during the troublesome administration of A. McLeod of Judicial celebrity. O'Hara received a note from Mr. Keith inviting him to return to his duty, and has taken his departure.

10th, Wednesday: The weather as yesterday. Received five trains fish from the Big Island; this establishment is now our only resource for subsistence and does not produce about 50 to 60 p diem, if it does not soon improve we shall be reduced to very great privations. The people have brought a report from the Fishery of Black's arrival at Fort Chipewyan attended by an Indian known by the Name of 'The Son of the White Partridge'¹ who is supposed to be one of the murderers of the late Owen Keveny;² if the Report is true, this amiable couple are no doubt brought here for some atrocious purpose. St. Picque has made such disclosures that I consider it proper to

¹ Jos  , the son of the White Partridge, a Saulteaux Indian from the Red River in the service of the N.W.C. He was alleged to have participated in the murders of Owen Keveny and Governor Semple. An Indian named 'The White Partridge' is included in a list of Indians given in Alexander Henry's journal (printed in Coues, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, vol. i, p. 53), and may possibly have been the father of 'The Son of the White Partridge'.

² The death of Owen Keveny at a point on the Winnipeg River on 11th September, 1816, was one of the incidents in the troubles between the H.B.C. and N.W.C. Charles de Reinhard confessed to killing Keveny, but owing to doubts as to the jurisdiction of the Courts of Lower Canada in the Indian country, where the death occurred, Reinhard escaped punishment. Jos  , the Son of the White Partridge, was accused along with Reinhard, but the Grand Jury returned a 'no bill' in his case. Cf. also MS. H.B.C. A, 8/1, fo. 93.

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January commit them to paper and he has this day made the following
1821 voluntary declaration. vizt.:

INDIAN TERRITORIES. I, Julien Tavurnur dit St. Picque, late of the Parish of Montreal, in the District of Montreal, Lower Canada, and now of Fort Wedderburn, Athabasca, in the Indian Territories of British North America, do voluntarily declare that I was engaged at Montreal in the capacity of Steersman for a term of three years commencing the 1st day of May 1819 by the Agents of the N.W. Coy.¹ That in the course of the Summer of 1819 I came to the N.W. Coys. establishment at Fort William² on Lake Superior, on my Route into the Interior, and while there that A. N. McLeod, & George Keith, both Partners of the N.W. Coy. spoke to me and said, that as I was a stout powerful man, my services would be required as a Bully in Athabasca to fight with and beat the servants of the H.B. Coy. (usually nick named 'putties'³ by the N.W. Coy.) and that if I made myself active and conspicuous in that way, I should be handsomely rewarded. From Fort William I proceeded to Lac La Pluie, and as the Athabasca Brigade had taken it's departure from thence previous to my arrival, it was determined that I should winter at Red River, when I accompanied one Cameron a N.W. Proprietor to their establishment at Pembina where I remained until the Spring of 1820. That frequently in the course of the winter of 1819 & 20, the said Cameron directed me to quarrel with the Colonists and H.B. Coys. servants and beat them whenever I had an opportunity, but having received no provocation from those people, I declined interfering with them. That when heated with Liquor during the

¹ The Montreal agents of the N.W.C. were the firm of McTavish, McGillivray and Co., who had succeeded the firm of McTavish, Frobisher and Co. as agents at some time between November 1805 and December 1806.

² The Wilderness headquarters of the N.W.C. It displaced Grand Portage as the most important N.W.C. post in 1803. Fort William was situated at the head of Lake Superior at the mouth of the Kaministiquia River, after which it was named when it was founded in 1803. It was named New Fort in 1805, and in 1807 its name was changed to Fort William, after William McGillivray.

³ Putties; Potties, a disparaging term in use amongst French Canadians, equivalent to the English 'small potatoes'.

New Year holidays, the said Cameron offered me a barrel of Spirits if I would challenge and fight a man named Larante belonging to the H.B. Coy. and assured me that if I killed or wounded the said Larante, he, Cameron, would protect me against all legal consequences. That while at the said N.W. Post at Pembina, I observed that Mr. Cameron was particularly assiduous in his attentions to the Settlers lately disbanded from the De Meuron & Watteville Regts.,¹ treated them with Liquor, Goods & provisions; and I have repeatedly heard him say, that if he could debauch the said disbanded Soldiers, or prevail on them to retire from the Red River; he would again collect the Half-breeds, and destroy the Colony.

That in the course of the said Winter Mr. Cameron & Mr. McBean² another N.W. Partner, together with their Clerks and confidential Halfbreeds, used every exertion to raise, collect & engage the Halfbreeds of the Red River District, and it's vicinity to assemble at the Grand Rapid in Spring, for the avowed purpose of intercepting the H.B. Coys. Brigade, returning from the Interior, and making prisoners of the said H.B. Coys. Officers in retaliation for the arrest of Messrs. Shaw, McTavish and others apprehended there the preceding Summer. That the avowed reason for employing the Halfbreeds instead of Canadians on this mission, was, that if any of the Hudson's Bay people were killed, the Half-breeds from their itinerant mode of Life, and knowledge of the country, could with more facility escape legal investigation, also that their ignorance of the Laws would protect them against it's punishments. Messrs. Cameron & McBean moreover took great pains to convince them that the Laws of Canada were quite subservient to the will and pleasure of the N.W. Coy., and that they could get acquitted of any crime or offence against the H.B. Coy. That about the latter end of May or beginning of June 1820, I went to the N.W. Coys. [fo. 79]

¹ The Watteville Regiment of Foreigners, named after General Watteville who was then in command of the Lower Canadian Frontier, arrived in Canada in 1813.

² John McBean. Cf. Appendix B.

January establishment at Bas de la Rivière¹ where I saw Messrs.
 1821 McTavish, Leith, McKenzie² McDonald,³ Campbell⁴ &
 Simon McGillivray, Partners of the N.W. Coy., together with
 a number of Clerks, Interpreters & Halfbreeds, amongst
 the latter Cuthbert Grant the Leader of the Half breeds at
 the Red River Massacre in June 1816,⁵ and several of his
 associates on that memorable occasion, also one Livingston a
 Contstable from Montreal. That I understood they had
 assembled there preparatory to their obstructing the H.B.
 Coys. Brigades coming from the Interior, and a few days
 afterwards they departed for the Grand Rapid in five Canoes
 deeply laden with arms & ammunition, mustering in all about
 sixty men. That a few days after this formidable war party
 (for so they were termed) had taken their departure for the
 Grande Rapid, I proceeded to Lac La Pluie, from thence to
 Fort William, and returned to Lac La Pluie accompanied by
 Archd. N. McLeod; when entering the River of Lac La Pluie,
 I observed a Light Canoe well manned paddling towards us;
 Mr. McLeod remarked: 'By God this is a prisoner, he must
 return with us.' When the two Canoes came along side each
 other, I observed Mr. Colin Robertson was on board that
 which joined us. Mr. McLeod ordered Mr. Robertson to
 embark in his McLeod's Canoe, which Mr. Robertson
 refused to do and insisted on being permitted to proceed;
 Mr. McLeod finding him obstinate in his determination to
 proceed, addressed me and said 'if he Mr. Robertson, does
 not willingly embark, you must take him by force, as there is
 a Brigade of Hudson's Bay Canoes behind that may probably
 rescue him.' Mr. Robertson after some discussion agreed
 to return with Mr. McLeod to Lac La Pluie. On my arrival
 there I found that the party, who had been at the Grande
 Rapid had returned; they seem delighted with the success of
 their mission, the Halfbreeds declared that they were treated

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 75, n. 4.

² Roderick Mackenzie, senior. Cf. Appendix B.

³ John McDonald. Cf. Appendix B.

⁴ Duncan Campbell. Cf. Appendix B.

⁵ Cf. Introduction, pp. xx, xxvi-xxvii.

like princes, had plenty of Liquor, and every thing that was good, and that it was fortunate that the Hudsons Bay people did not resist or attempt to escape otherways they would have fired upon them and put every soul to death. That while at Lac La Pluie I was present when Archd. N. McLeod called the people together, gave us a present of a barrel of Spirits, and made a long speech in which he told us, that we must implicitly obey the orders of our Masters, that it was the business of them to consider whether the Orders were legal or otherways; that the 'Putties' (meaning the H.B. Coy.) must this year be destroyed; that he Archd. N. McLeod had plenty of Money, and he would stand between the people and all Legal consequences, in carrying their Masters orders into effect against the H.B. Coy., that whatever we did towards the H.B. Coy., would not be looked upon as a crime in the Courts of Canada, and that every man who made himself conspicuous in the War against the 'Putties' would be handsomely rewarded. At the conclusion of this animating speech; the Partners, Clerks, and People expressed their approbation by loud & reiterated huzza's. From Lac La Pluie I proceeded to Bas de la Rivierre in Messrs. Leith & Keith's Canoe, on my Route to Athabasca; at Bas de la Rivierre we remained two or three days and accompanied the Inland Brigades, about twenty one Canoes in number to the Grand Rapid, where we were informed that the H.B. Brigades were crossing the Portage; when they had left the Portage the N.W. Brigades were left in charge of Simon McGillivray and I proceeded with Messrs. Leith & Keith in a Light Canoe for Athabasca. During the passage these Gentlemen frequently remarked, that as Mr. Robertson was captured, Mr. Clarke would of course come in as Chief of the Athabasca Department, and seemed to congratulate themselves on the anticipation of having every thing their own way, as they would very soon take him into their custody. That about ten days after I got to Fort Chipewyan, Mr. Simon McGillivray arrived, and directed me, Soucisse, Wilburner & the principal fighting characters belonging to the establishment to take up our Residence at the Watch House adjoining the H.B. Coys. establishment of

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January 1821 Fort Wedderburn, there to hold ourselves in readiness to attack the 'Putties' (H.B. Coy.) and that he would soon join us, commence open hostilities, and fix them, *i.e.* take them all Prisoners. That previous to Mr. Leiths departure for Peace River, he called me and the greater part of our people together, and in a speech of some length, directed us to unite our exertions in opposing the H.B. Coy. by every means in our power, that if any prisoners were taken by the H.B. Coy., we must retaliate in the proportion of two for one; that Messrs. Keith & S. McGillivray's orders must be obeyed without hesitation, in whatever related to the H.B. Coy and that he would protect us against any future Legal consequences. That Messrs. Keith & McGillivray informed me that Soucisse was their confidential Agent, and whatever he directed must be done forthwith; that Soucisse accordingly told me that the 'Putties' (Hudsons Bay Coy.) were a set of Villains, Rascals, and intruders, and must this winter be made to abandon Athabasca, that he and myself should be the leaders, and that we had nothing to fear as there was no Law for them (The H.B. Coy.) in Canada. That in the Month of October Mr. Simon McGillivray took up his residence with us at the Watch House, and informed myself & Soucisse that we must now commence hostilities against the 'Putties' (the H.B. Coy.) and addressing himself to me particularly said, that I must stand on no ceremony in beating their people; I replied, that it was sufficient time to do so when they affronted me, but hitherto they appeared very quiet and peaceable; he rejoined I shall soon find means to pick a quarrel with them, and you must then shew your Loyalty. Mr. McGillivray soon afterwards gave general directions that a quarrel should be commenced by attacking & beating the first man belonging to the 'Putties' they could meet. A favorable opportunity almost immediately presented itself; On a Sunday afternoon one Taylor a servant of the H.B. Coy. was passing at some distance behind the N.W. Watch House, with a load of firewood on his shoulder, he was observed by Linton & Wilburner, two N.W. Clerks: who immediately went up to him, and without any provocation, the latter knocked him down, beat and maltreated him in a most

[fo. 80]

inhuman manner; on their return Wilburner said to Mr. McGillivray 'by God I have beat him well;' Mr. McGillivray replied, 'You have done right he deserved it.' In the course of a few minutes afterwards, Lamallice the Guide came from Fort Wedderburn with a message from Mr. Simpson to Mr. McGillivray inquiring into the cause of the assault on Taylor; when Soucisse ran into the Men's House and seemingly overjoyed said, 'we have now got what we want, I am glad the "Putties" (the H.B. Coy.) have taken up the quarrel, you must all turn out against them, the Guns are loaded I have three for my own use.' Several of the men refused to take up arms, saying that their own party (the N.W. Coy.) were the aggressors, that Taylor had given no offence, and therefore they would not interfere. Some however did take Guns and McGillivray & Soucisse went forward, each armed with pistols and had a communication with Mr. Simpson which I could not distinctly hear. On our return into the House McGillivray called me, and asked why I did not take up arms, told me that the Guns were all loaded with Ball, and that every man should take one when any dispute occurred with the 'Putties,' continuing to address me he said 'Did you not see how one of them fired a pistol at me?' I replied that I was close to the man when he fired the Pistol, that it was pointed towards the Lake and therefore could not be meant for him. Mr. McGillivray rejoined 'it was meant for me altho' it did not hit and you should have fired immediately as the Half-breeds did at Red River.' That on the 23rd Octr. last Mr. McGillivray directed me to dig the foundation of a Bastion close to the Bastion of Fort Wedderburn, on looking at the ground I remonstrated with him as also did several of our people against Building so near the H.B. establishment, told him that it would be encroaching several feet on the boundary Line, and that we were certain that the H.B. people would not permit it; he and Soucisse then said that their object in building upon the H.B. ground was to produce a quarrel with them. After this interview I was sent into the woods, and was not present when Mr. McGillivray was arrested by Mr. Grignon, the Contstable. In the course of the day I called on Mr.

January 1821

January Keith at Fort Chipewyan, who was much irritated at Mr.
 1821 McGillivray's imprudence by interfering with the H.B. people, he remarked that Mr. McGillivray was over confident in his own abilities, that when the subject was proposed, he dissuaded him from attempting it, and concluded by observing that he had no right to build on the H.B. Ground. Mr. Keith soon afterwards asked me if I thought the N.W. had sufficient force to take Fort Wedderburn; I told him we had twenty one men besides Officers at the Watch House, but that I did not think they would all fight, moreover that it would be dangerous to attempt entering the Fort, as I knew that the H.B. people were prepared to defend to the last, and that I was confident some of us would fall if the experiment was made, the plan was therefore abandoned. Mr. Keith & Soucisse afterwards proposed that we should take the H.B. Fishermen & Nets, which would soon reduce the Putties to starvation and be enabled to dictate our own terms and take them all prisoners, after some deliberation that was also considered a dangerous enterprise and accordingly abandoned; he then determined on sending Expresses to Peace River and Isle ala Crosse for a re-inforcement of Men and in order to consult his colleagues and would afterwards adopt whatever plan was considered safest and best. That on the night of Sunday the 3rd Decemr. between the hours of 8 & 9 O'Clock, Mr. McGillivray came to the N.W. Watch House, with no other Clothes than his Shirt, Trowsers & Shoes and informed me that he had escaped from Fort Wedderburn, by getting over the Pickets behind the Smith's Shop, and that he had eluded the vigilance of the man who attended him, by dressing himself in a gown belonging to his Woman; he then directed us to keep watch during the Night and have our arms in readiness in the event of the H.B. people, attempting to retake him, he then went over to Fort Chipewyan where he has since taken up his residence. That since Mr. McGillivray's escape he has had several quarrels with Soucisse and charged him with cowardice because he did not fire on the H.B. Gentleman when the Officer arrested him, and Soucisse uniformly replied, 'I have hitherto been the Leader in every illegal act, that has been committed against the

H.B. people in Athabasca, and I shall not expose myself to be hung by murdering any man.' Mr. McGillivray seemed determined to punish Soucisse, for this want of Loyalty, and accordingly sent him off on a Journey to Peace River, but after he had proceeded three days he was compelled to return by a swelling in his ancles. January 1821

That both before and after Mr. McGillivray's arrest, I have frequently heard Mr. Keith, McGillivray & Soucisse say, that Mr. Simpson must be taken prisoner in the course of the Winter, also every Officer belonging to the H.B. establishment. That particularly on Xmas morning Mr. McGillivray called at the N.W. Watch House and informed myself and the rest of the men publicly that every exertion must be made to capture Mr. Simpson, that he was determined on having him secured in Fort Chipewyan, and would disappoint his Expectations of getting to England as he meant to give him a long Voyage. That I have learnt from Mr. McGillivray and Soucisse, that an Express has been sent to Fort Vermillion, Peace River, for Mr. Black (a N.W. proprietor who has made himself notorious by his violent and outrageous conduct against the H.B. Coy.) in order that he may join them in commencing open hostilities against the said H.B. Coys. people at Fort Wedderburn, and that nothing short of the total annihilation of the said H.B. Coy. is in contemplation. That on the morning of New Years Day, I called at Fort Chipewyan, and saw Mr. Keith who said 'You have done nothing as yet against the "Putties" it is now time that you should show yourself.' My reply was 'when they affront me I will resent it.' The same morning Soucisse called the people together, and told them that Messrs. Keith & McGillivray had made them a present of a large Barrel of Spirits; that before now they expected assistance from Isle ala Crosse; but their hands were full there, and therefore they should be under the necessity of doing the business of the 'Putties' themselves. That when talking with Soucisse on the subject of the differences between the H.B. & N.W. Coys., I have frequently heard him say, that if he Soucisse joined the 'Putties' he would ruin the N.W. Co., as he knows all their villainous [fo. 81]

January actions: I have also heard Larocque say, that the 'Putties'
 1821 had a Warrant against him, and that if he was taken he must tell the truth, and his evidence would hang many of the N.W. Masters. That in conversation once with Soucisse, I have heard him say, that it is generally understood that the late Mr. Johnston of Isle ala Crosse, a H.B. Officer was murdered by a Half-breed or Indian, but that he Soucisse knows that Jean Baptste. Durocher was the assassin, that he has frequently boasted of the deed, and that the Murder was preconcerted between him (Durocher) and Black. That I cannot say that I have been ordered distinctly to Murder any of the H.B. Coys. Officers or Men, but Messrs. Keith & McGillivray's remarks clearly imply, that Murder is their wish, and have frequently assured me, that they would protect me if any quarrel with the H.B. Co. terminated fatally.

That the sole cause of my leaving the service of the N.W. Co. and joining the H.B. Coy. was, that illegal duties were imposed on me by Messrs. Keith & McGillivray, and that altho' in my cool & sober moments, I would refuse to commit those illegal actions, I might be induced unguardedly or when heated by Liquor to do some outrage to the Laws of my country, and thereby expose myself to it's severest punishments. That a few days ago, since I have joined the H.B. Coy., I have been informed by Rondeau & Joseph¹ two N.W. Servants that Soucisse, Fleurie,² and Boileau, have publicly declared, that if they find me outside the Stockades of Fort Wedderburn, or discover that I in any shape espouse the cause of the H.B. Coy. they mean to shoot me.

I do hereby declare that the preceding declaration is true, and that I am ready when called upon to substantiate its veracity by affidavit; I also declare that it is voluntary; and not given by the desire or request of any person belonging to the H.B. Coy, not arising from any malicious or vindictive

¹ Probably a half-breed in the service of the N.W.C. Not identified.

² Very probably Louis Fleurie, a Canadian or half-breed, who was serving with the N.W.C. in Athabaska, 1818-19.

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feeling towards the N.W. Co., but from pure honourable and disinterested motives.—(Signed) January 1821

His
JULIEN TAVURNUR **X** DIT ST. PICQUE
mark

Declared before me at Fort Wedderburn Athabasca Lake in the Indian Territories of British North America this tenth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty one.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

signed	WM. BROWN	}	Witnesses
	ROBT. SEABORN MILES		
	J. OXLEY, Half pay		
	3rd Wt. India Regt. ¹		

11th, Thursday: The weather cloudy and very mild. Sent five Trains for fish to the Old Fort. Chaurit and the ‘Swan’² one of our Fort Hunters arrived, the latter very unwell and intends remaining here until his recovery. The Hunters continue unsuccessful, they have only one animal *en cache*; if they are not more fortunate in the course of a few weeks, they intend discontinuing their hunts: we must not in future depend on Chipewyan Fort Hunters, they are such Slaves to superstitious ideas that even to save their own existence they will not attempt a struggle against misfortune, I shall therefore endeavour to secure a few Crees from the neighbourhood of Berens House for next winter. Our people variously employed about the Fort; Clouston repairing Guns & Francois making Ball Cartridges. Chastellain the Trader at a Salary of £175 p annum & Lamallice the Guide at £160 seem much discontented that our Larder does not produce greater varieties than white-fish boiled & roasted; they however fare as I do and therefore have no cause to grumble; they both feign indisposition in order to avoid any sort of duty; I must endeavour to purge Athabasca of such useless drones.

¹ I.e. West India Regiment.
² An Indian, probably a Chipewyan; his name does not occur in the list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21.

January 12th, Friday : The weather continues mild and the people
 1821 employed about the Fort as yesterday. The non-arrival of
 our men who went to the Fishery is extraordinary, and I feel
 rather anxious about them. Mr. Back of the Expedition
 dined with us to day, he brings no news from Fort Chipewyan.

13th, Saturday : A quantity of snow fell in the course of last
 night and the weather cold to day. The two men who went to
 the Rivierre Embaras on the 5th Inst. returned with two loads
 of Train Timber. The men who went to the Old Fort on the
 [fo. 82] 11th returned this afternoon, their delay gave us great uneasi-
 ness, and I was apprehensive that the N.W. had taken them
 and our Fisheries which would have been a death blow to our
 prospects, as at present we have not sufficient force to retaliate,
 and even with the strictest œconomy not eight days provisions
 on hand: out of Twenty one persons now in the Fort including
 Officers there are not more than six that I could depend on in
 case of actual danger, hence arises the propriety and I may add
 necessity of having a few trusty European Servants and English
 Halfbreeds in this country during the heat of opposition.

14th, Sunday : Sent nine trains for fish to the Old Fort and
 St. Denis our New Guide with two men to make trains, where
 he is to remain in charge of the Fish. Gave him and the men
 who accompanied him Guns and Ammunition for their pro-
 tection. Directed Mr. Chastellain to hold himself in readi-
 ness to go to the Old Fort in the course of a day or two where he
 is to remain until the Fish are brought home.

15th Monday : The frost intense to day and quite calm. The
 sun did unveil itself to day for a wonder, at least I saw the
 reflection of it on the snow at a distance, but the Hill behind our
 Fort, and it's Northern aspect guards us effectually from it's
 rays. Nine trains fish arrived from the Old Fort. Recd. the
 following Letter from Mr. Back: vizt.

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 16th (meant 15th) Jany., 1821.
 To, GEO. SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

The urgency of our affairs compels me to address you
 once more on the subject of the Expedition. The time is

now approaching when I must return, and since your pieces are not yet arrived from Isle ala Crosse and probably may not for some weeks or even months, I have to request you will contribute further to our extreme necessity, by making an addition to your former list. I ask this, from the apprehension that you can remedy any defect hereafter arising from our demands, especially as your expected pieces must arrive sooner or later, whereas this is our last resource, and failing in this we lose all. If you consider the necessity of the Officers (not to mention the men) who are destitute of the most common articles of Dress, such as Spirits &c., [sic] I cannot persuade myself you will permit me to quit this Department without providing (at least) for them. I trust you will comply with my desire were it only for the reputation of the Honble. H.B. Coy., nor let this be recorded as a solitary instance where both parties have not equally contributed to our wants.

I am, Sir, Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEORGE BACK, R.N.

The Fort is quite an hospital at present, Lamallice confined to Bed by Rheumatism to save himself the trouble of making snow shoes and trains, Chastellain coughs violently in order that he may be excused going to the Fishery, Squint Eyes and the Swan Fort Hunters really unwell; I have prescribed blisters and purges to the two former, but they seem to think that idleness and a change of Diet would remove their complaints without the aid of medicine & Mr. Miles has kindly undertaken to administer to the Indians as Mr. Oxley conceives that the medical duties are too much for one man.

16th, Tuesday : Wrote the following Letter.

FORT WEDDERBURN, *16th Jany.*, 1821.

GEORGE BACK, ESQRE.

SIR,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of yesterday's date, and beg to assure you it gives me much concern, that I am not at present enabled in any shape to administer to your wants, beyond the small List handed you on the

January 4th Inst.; my inability I trust will not be construed into an
 1821 unwillingness to accomodate the Expedition, as it is not only the positive instructions of the Committee that every assistance and facility should be rendered, but to myself individually nothing could be more gratifying than having it in my Power to supply it's present exigencies. You appear to be in possession of information relative to our Isle ala Crosse supplies with which I am unacquainted, as in my humble opinion there is no probability of a lapse of several months intervening previous to their receipt, and if the quantity which I expect does arrive there is little doubt but I shall be enabled to make some addition to the List. The District of Gt. Slave Lake must labour under serious difficulties from the liberal supply furnished by Mr. McVicar considering his limited Outfit and until the goods expected from Isle ala Crosse make their appearance I have not the means of forwarding those articles of which he has deprived himself by handing to the Expedition. Under all the circumstances of the case, I do not see that the 'reputation of the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy' stands in any danger of being tarnished, nor can the imputation lay against them of not evincing the most lively interest in the objects of the Expedition, and without desiring to cast any invidious reflections on the N.W. Coy. it must be admitted that we have done more towards it's success than they have notwithstanding all their specious professions, nay more than was either expected or required by Lieut. Franklin; if those Gentn. aspired to be put on an equality with the Honble. H.B. Coy. in their good offices towards the prosperity of the Expedition they should evince it by administering with equal liberality to it's necessities. Your Journal will no doubt however give a candid and ingenuous statement of their conduct in regard to the Eight pieces which were brought from the Rock Depot by us agreeable to arrangement for their Brigade, and actually turned out of their Fort and Canoes, and the only way in which they can effectually bury that circumstance in oblivion is by delivering the like number of pieces at Gt. Slave Lake.

I am, Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

To the above I received the following answer, vizt. (see January forward): 1821

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 16th (should be 17th) *Jany.*, 1821. [fo. 83]

GEORGE SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

Your communication of the 16th Date is now before me and I can only repeat my chagrin that you are unable to make any further augmentation to our necessities. I feel it an incumbent duty on me to inform you that which I expressed about Isle à la Crosse is a speculation of my own, arising from my Knowledge of the difficulties to be encountered between that place and Athabasca in the Winter Season. However it will be extremely gratifying to me should the supplies arrive before my departure, but whether that occur or not, rest assured I shall always have a sensible pleasure in informing Lieut. Franklin of your kindness. I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. BACK, R.N.

Fine clear weather with severe Frost. Sent nine trains to the Old Fort. Duford arrived from the Big Island with a Train of fish: Both fisheries there produce about 100 p diem which is barely sufficient to maintain those establishments, our Stock altogether is at present from 5 to 6000 which is very inadequate to our consumption as the Fishery is not expected to improve before the 20th of March.

17th, *Wednesday*: The weather continues fine but very severe. Received nine trains fish from the Old Fort; all the people who have dogs are kept constantly at work hauling fish in order to lay up a good stock before the running season commences, the rest occupied in cutting & hauling Fire wood, sawing Timber for a new house & making snow shoes &c. &c. For several months past Mr. Brown has been industriously occupied in compiling a huge Volume titled 'Private Journal.'¹

¹ A 'Journal of transactions and occurrences at Fort Wedderburn', kept by William Brown commencing 6th June, 1820, and ending 10th February,

January 1821 This seems to be a work of great labour not only occupying his attention throughout the day, but his lucubrations are unremittingly devoted thereto. Being labelled 'Private Journal' I have hitherto felt a delicacy in asking any questions about it, but within these few days, he seems very solicitous to get possession of a variety of documents (without my privity) which are totally foreign to him in his capacity of District Master of Athabasca Lake; I have therefore to day taken the liberty of enquiring into the object of this ponderous compilation; he seemed rather puzzled at the question and said: that it was merely a few private remarks on the affairs of the Department; this being by no means a satisfactory reply, I told him that his business was to keep a correct, particular and concise Journal of the Post for the inspection of his superiors, and that in all probability I should require a duplicate thereof in Spring as it would be of material assistance to any Gentleman who might succeed him if a stranger to the Country in regulating the usual arrangements of the Post; but that I could allow no Gentleman to interlard his private Journal with the minutiae of the Coys. business and therefore requested it might be discontinued. I took some pains to convince Mr. Brown that my remarks did not arise from any suspicion that *he* would make an improper use of the information he might thus embody, but to guard generally against the designing views of people who may through caprice or otherways become disaffected and convert such documents to the prejudice of their employers, & that I did intend suggesting to Govr. Williams the propriety of having every Gentleman's papers strictly examined previous to leaving the country and that whatever related to public business should be delivered into his possession. In times like the present our Opponents would give any price for such a mass of information as he or any other Gentleman in a prominent situation might collect from Official documents and I do conceive it should be put out of the power of any man to

1821, is now MS. H.B.C. B.39/a/16. This, however, is obviously not Brown's private journal but his official journal of Fort Wedderburn. The entries in this journal for 17th January, 1821, contain no reference to his conversation with Simpson about his private journal.

betray the confidence which must necessarily be reposed in him if possible: there are annually repeated instances of Gentlemen changing sides and laying open the most private and important secrets of the Trade, it is our business to get information in this manner but to prevent an equivalent in kind being made if possible:—and in addition to the risk of designing persons making improper uses of such information, it is dangerous to have documents of so much importance in the possession of individuals as the system of Kidnapping is now so prevalent that on every Portage we run the hazard of not only being captured, but our papers ransacked & perhaps stolen.

January
1821

18th Thursday: Sent ten trains to the Old Fort for fish. Squint Eyes is now sufficiently well to resume his duty as Fort Hunter, and started for the neighbourhood of Lac Clear with his wife & 'the Fool'¹ attended by Duford and his woman. Mr. Back dined with me to day and says that Black made his appearance to Breakfast this morning at Fort Chipewyan; one of the McGillivrays accompanied him from Fort Vermillion: no sooner was Black's arrival announced than the arms were carefully inspected; he is such a turbulent character that we cannot expect to remain tranquil for any length of time. The weather continues very fine.

19th, Friday: The weather has been remarkably fine to day, the air temperate and the sun powerfull for the season of the year. Received nine trains fish from the Old Fort. Snakehall a Relative of St. Picquè's called on him this forenoon, I had some conversation with him, and he informs me that he arrived from Vermillion accompanied by Black & Wm. McGillivray on the evening of the 17th Inst.; that at the Chutes of Peace River within half a day's march of Colvile House, they met our Interpreter 'Bouche' who left this place on the 8th Decr. with five men returning from a band of Indians, and that it was Bouche's intention to have come on from thence without returning to Colvile House, but that he had unfortunately cut his leg with an axe and so lame that he could not walk: he moreover informs me that our packet was forwarded from [fo. 84]

¹ Probably a Chipewyan employed by the H.B.C. as a hunter. The list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21, does not include his name.

January 1821 Colville House and had passed Vermillion a few days before he started in charge of Mr. McBean and one man, also that our Gentlemen at Colville House and the N.W. people at Vermillion were on amicable terms. I am doubtful what to make of this report, it appears studied and probably was manufactured for the occasion: he remained here for about an hour and then returned to Fort Chipewyan: after his departure St. Picquè informed me that Black had sent him a very polite Invitation to return, but that he had been so kindly treated here that nothing would induce him to desert us. About four O'Clock in the afternoon Snakehall again called on St. Picquè, under the pretence of making some exchange of clothes &c; he remained about an hour in the men's house and then took his departure, St. Picquè accompanying him to the Gate, from whence the latter returned to the Men's house; in about a quarter of an hour afterwards however he went out and has not since been seen; his track was found on the Snow to the S.E. corner of the Fort where he scaled the Stockades. I do not believe that St. Picquè had any premeditated idea of returning, but that Black's plausible messages have shaken his determination, which altogether with the formidable appearance our Opponents now make, has frightened him into a compliance. Hitherto I have had sanguine hopes of making a tolerable stand against our Opponents this season, but our affairs now wear a different aspect: our Stores are nearly empty, they are well supplied with every article necessary for the Trade; they have three Partners & five Clerks, men of activity, determination and experience, Whereas Messrs. Brown, Miles & Oxley are the only Gentlemen I have at present in whom any confidence can be placed; they can bring into the field Three Bullies and three noted assassins, thank God we have no such characters about us, their men outnumber us by fully one third, experienced Voyageurs and the greater part of them able to run after and talk to Indians, on the contrary a great proportion of our men are raw and inexperienced who have not physical strength to undergo the labours and privations of a voyaging life; they have a host of attached Half-breeds who are a most useful set of people, we have not one

of that description; their Women are faithful to their cause and good Interpreters whereas we have but one in the Fort (Lamallice's Wife) that can talk Chipewyan, and I have reason to believe she is disaffected, in short we labour under a thousand disadvantages, and until our means are somewhat on a par it is quite impossible to expect that the Coys affairs can prosper in Athabasca. About ten P.M., Rocheleau one of the men who left this place in the fall for Isle ala Crosse arrived, accompanied by a N.W. deserter. The former brings me a Letter from Mr. McLeod at Lac La Loche Dated 28th December, which merely states that our Canoe was detained there as at the time it was considered impracticable to get this length by open water. Mr. Grignon had arrived there on the 18th and proceeded to Isle ala Crosse the following Day; this man and the rest of the people would have come on immediately with the goods agreeable to my Letter of 30th Novr. to Mr. McLeod, but he could not supply them with provisions and it was not until ten days afterwards that he was enabled to send off Rocheleau & Bibeau with a Keg of Rum, Roll of Tobacco & a few Belts and files; at Berens house Bibeau was Knocked up where he remains & Mr. Greill has kept the Rum, Belts and part of the files. Rocheleau was detained eight days at Berens house for provisions which he fetched from the *câche's* 5 days march. Mr. Greill writes me that two of our Indians accompanied by Dominique ¹ crossed the River fifteen miles above Beren's house a few days ago, they had made no hunt comparatively speaking on account of the death of a relation and are in a miserable state destitute of every thing; he sent them a small supply of ammunition, Rum & Tobacco. Mr. O'Doherty who had charge of the Canoe from Isle ala Crosse has I suspect neglected his duty and made free with the Spirit Kegs, he must account for his conduct on his arrival. Rocheleau's statement altho' by no means satisfactory is however some relief as I did entertain very serious apprehensions that Grignon and the packet were taken. Mr. Greill's Letter says nothing as to his prospects in Trade, he has thirteen animals *en cache*.

¹ Not identified.

January
1821

January 20th, *Saturday* : A considerable quantity of Snow fell in the
 1821 course of today and the weather has a very stormy appearance.
 Sent seven trains to the Old Fort and two to the Big Island for
 Fish. I have directed the N.W. man who arrived last night to
 keep himself secreted in the Fort for the present : his state-
 ment is that he was engaged last year in Montreal for the
 Columbia, that in proceeding up the Beaver River in Mr.
 Stuart's Brigade the canoe in which he was fell in with a band
 of Indians from whom they traded some provisions for Rum;
 the Indians required more Rum which was refused, and while
 in the act of embarking they fired upon the Canoe and killed
 two of the Crew, the others darted into the woods for safety
 but lost sight of each other; this man followed the course of the
 River and in five days afterwards got to the N.W. establish-
 ment at Green Lake, from thence he was sent to Isle ala
 Crosse where he was told that in consequence of having aban-
 doned the Canoe he should forfeit his Wages, and be com-
 pelled to march to the Columbia in the course of the winter;
 he was accordingly sent with two men from Isle alà Crosse
 for Athabasca almost in a state of nudity, and finding his Life
 in danger by this rigorous treatment, he deserted to our estab-
 lishment at Berens House and from thence accompanied
 Rocheleau hither soliciting my protection. If he is claimed
 by the N.W. I cannot well object to delivering him up, but
 would prefer they did not know he is here until after the arrival
 of our Isle ala Crosse people as it is desirable they should be
 unacquainted with our proceedings in that quarter at present.

[fo. 85] 21st, *Sunday* : Mr. Oxley gave me verbal notice this morn-
 ing, that he intended returning to England next season, as
 the Company had no claim on his services; this I told him I
 could not agree to as it would in some measure derange the
 plans I had formed for establishing the Rocky Mountain, but
 that if he could show me any document or assign any cogent
 reason why he should retract from his agreement with me on
 that subject I would pay the necessary attention thereto, and in
 order to explain the matter fully I now find it necessary to
 advert to a communication with him so far back as the 17th
 Novr., prior to that date it was settled that he should accompany

Mr. Andries to McKenzie's River, but having learnt that he was likely to sustain many hardships in that country he requested Mr. Brown to solicit a transfer of his services to the Rocky Mountain, he did not however touch on the subject with me, but on the 17th Novr. I received the following note from him, vizt.:

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1821

FORT WEDDERBURN 17th Novr., 1820.

GEORGE SIMPSON ESQRE.

SIR

I beg you will excuse this liberty of my addressing you. Being very desirous to return to England in the ensuing Spring; I have therefor to request you will be good enough to inform the Govr. in Chief of my intentions; It's true I was engaged for three years in the service of The Honble. Hudsons Bay Coy. if I found myself useful, this I mentioned to my introducer N. Garry Esqre.¹ one of the Honble. Committee, and if I was not of service I should return to Europe for which permission I now solicit your approbation.—I am, Sir, Your Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) J. OXLEY, *H.M. 3rd Wt. India.*

In the course of the evening I called him into my Room, when he informed me that his contract with the Company expressed that he should remain no longer in the country than he considered his services useful; moreover that his friends Messrs. Garry & Halkett² also Mr. Smith the Secy.³ had informed him so: I however told him that I conceived he misunderstood the engagement as the Committee of the Honble. H.B. Coy. were not in the habit of doing business in such a loose and slovenly manner, at least none of the engagements that had come under my notice were so expressed or even implied, and recommended him strongly to abandon all thoughts of returning until the expiration of his engagement; he then said that if I would alter

¹ Nicholas Garry, a member of the H.B.C. committee. Cf. Appendix B.

² John Halkett, a member of the H.B.C. committee. Cf. Appendix B.

³ William Smith was appointed Secretary of the H.B.C. on 17th June, 1818, at a salary of £300 p.a. He died on the 18th January, 1843.

January his destination in Spring from McKenzie's River to the Rocky
 1821 Mountain and was not put in an inferior situation to Mr. Greill (late Serjt. in the Meurons)¹ he would accompany Mr. Brown with pleasure, this arrangement I agreed to and have accordingly given Govr. Williams my sentiments thereon in my communication of 30th Novr., but made no remark on the subject in my Journal of that date, as at the time it did not alter my arrangements: from that period I have had no communication with him on the business until this morning; when I went into his Room & requested the favor of his Dressing a Blister which had been applied to one of the Indians; this he objected to do alleging that it was not his duty and that the other Gentlemen should take their turn of the Surgical operations: I told him that all the other Officers here were busily occupied and that he could not complain of being over wrought since his arrival in Athabasca, as in fact he had nothing to occupy his attention except the armoury and occasionally administering to an Invalid. He then told me that he was determined to return home, and if I did not choose to give him a passage he would find a conveyance; which intimation I could view in no other light than a threat that he would go out in the N.W. Brigade. I requested he would show me a duplicate of his contract or any written document he had and that it would set the matter to rest, he said he had a document in his possession which would justify his conduct either to the Govr. or Committee and that he did not consider it necessary to exhibit it to me, however that he would address me officially and require my answer in writing, at same time hinted, that his misunderstanding with Mr. Brown was in a great measure the cause of his determination:—the nature of this misunderstanding I presume Mr. Brown's journal will explain as it was connected with business. I regret to say that Mr. Oxley's recent conduct has altered the good opinion I had formed of him; his appearance is much in his favor and from documents I have seen purporting to be his own composition

¹ Oxley was a half pay officer in the 3rd West Indian Regiment and consequently resented being put in an inferior position to Greill, who had only held non-commissioned rank in de Meuron's Regiment.

I did suppose he did possess some mental capacity, but I have lately discovered that he cannot even convey a common place idea in a legible shape, and that whatever comes from his pen must undergo the revision and correction of another before it is in a fit state to meet the Eye; this is no unusual circumstance in the Compys Service, but in my opinion very reprehensible as it is a mean and despicable imposition on the Committee & Govr in Chief, who might conceive (through such imposition) men capable of important duties for which they are totally disqualified. Mr. Oxley assumes indecorous consequence from the circumstance of his being a Half Pay Lieut. in the Army, and seems to consider it derogatory to his dignity to make himself useful about the place: he has his share of the best living our Store can afford, but makes grievous complaints, on that head, his general dissatisfaction is productive of serious mischief as it spreads like a contagion to our Half Gentry who are already sufficiently disaffected, and his example tends to create insubordination and discord among our little society. Military Gentlemen from the few examples I have seen are very unfit subjects for this country, we do not want idlers, but men of good sound constitutions who can make up their minds to the drudgery of the service, the mode of living, want of comfort, and general privations & inconveniences which are incident to the country: it is not therefore on account of the value of Mr. Oxley's services that I object to his retiring but to prevent the dangerous precedent of Gentlemen suiting their own inclination at pleasure, and thereby sacrificing the Compys Interests.

22nd, Monday: Fine clear Weather. Received six trains [fo. 86] fish from the Old Fort and two from the Big Island. A boy arrived from the Fort Hunters for a supply of ammunition and Tobacco, they have a Moose *en cache* at a distance of three days march. Mr. Back favoured me with his Company to dinner.

23rd, Tuesday: Weather as yesterday. Sent six trains to the Old Fort fishery; and two for the Moose *en cache*; Bibeau & the Indian boy gone to the Hunters with a supply of ammunition & Tobacco. Knipe returned from the Big Island our Fisheries there do not produce more than about 50 each.

January 24th, *Wednesday*: The season continues uncommonly fine
 1821 and the weather more like the middle of Spring than the depth
 of Winter. The Carpenters building a stable in the canoe
 yard. Recd. six trains fish from the Old Fort. My anxiety
 about Bouche is at length removed by his & Blondin's arrival;
 the N.W. report was for a wonder correct, he had a very serious
 accident having cut the front of his leg with a hatchet which
 accounts for his delay, and altho' it is not yet well he has made
 a very expeditious Journey having come from Colvile House in
 six days, the ordinary time is 9 days. By him I have received
 Letters from Mr. McBean of 20th Decr. and from Laronde of
 16th & 17th Inst.; the former Gentleman proceeded to St.
 Marys with the packet on the 21st Decr. Our people at
 Colvile House have been nearly famished; the Fort Hunters
 could not even maintain themselves and were obliged to
 come to the Post repeatedly for subsistence; this has been
 entirely owing to the mildness of the season as the Buffaloe &
 Moose are so acute in the senses of smelling & hearing that the
 Hunters cannot approach them except in Boisterous Weather
 when the rustling of the branches and keeping to Leeward of
 the animals enables them to get within gunshot. The little
 stock of Flour that Mr. Laronde had in the Fall for his pri-
 vate use was actually the salvation of the Post which shows the
 necessity of a good supply of that article being annually pro-
 vided. Our Opponents were similarly situated but the pro-
 duce of their extensive Gardens was a great relief. The
 fishery at Loon Lake did not succeed owing 'tis probable to
 their not having an experienced Fisherman. According to
 Indian report there is a Lake about two days march from the
 Fort which abounds with Whitefish, but as the natives of
 Peace River depend entirely on their hunts for subsistence they
 are unacquainted with the mode of taking Fish, and their in-
 formation cannot be depended on. If we have a sufficient
 number of Fisherman next season, I intend providing even the
 meat Posts with one or more and a good supply of twine for
 nets, as the country is so much intercepted with Rivers &
 Lakes, that there is no doubt of securing fish in any part of it.
 Mr. Laronde has a considerable stock of goods still on hand,

sufficient I conceive for the spring & summer Trade: he has not heard of his Fur Hunters since their departure in the Fall which augurs well as it is a proof that they are neither starving nor in bad health and therefore I indulge the hope that they are industriously occupied. Mr. Laronde was unable to send to Hays River on account of the scarcity of provisions but intends visiting that part of the country in Spring. None of the Colvile House people are yet re-engaged, they have so often been told that we expect large reinforcements of Men from Canada, and so often discovered that these statements are made to induce them to engage on what they call low terms that they intend this season waiting until they get to the Depot, and if we are disappointed in our hopes from Canada we must descend to the humiliating terms of soliciting a renewal of their services at such Wages as they choose to exact. Mr. Laronde renews his contract for one year on the same terms as last.

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1821

Recd. the following note: vizt.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 23rd Jany. 1821.

GEO. SIMPSON ESQUIRE (a literal copy)

SIR,

I regret extremely that necessity obliges me to intercept the systematic order of your time for a few moments; and I trust you will accept my apology for so doing. You may recollect I took the liberty of making known my wishes to you in a recent communication and it is to that point I should hope once more to attract your attention. I find by experience which I could not previously be acquainted with; neither the nature nor climat of this country will agree with my health, indeed my constitution is greatly debilitated (a circumstance that never occurred before) and for which I undergo a perpetual disquietude. In short I find myself totally unfit for service (That is naturally expected in this country) & therefore request you will permit me to take a passage out in the Spring Canoes That I may be enabled to proceed with the Company's Ship to England. It is true I made some promise to accompany Mr. Brown to the Mountain

January but I am sorry to remarke that This Gentleman & me could
 1821 not possibly coinside, I do not mention so trivial an affair as an
 additional plea to my request. No Sir it is absolute inability &
 indisposition that alon oblige me to aske you this Boon. and
 though I confess myself guilty of much egotism yet I cannot
 avoid repeating my earnest hope of your acquiescence from
 which favour shall always esteem myself happy in having the
 honor to remain

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) J. OXLEY.

25th, Thursday : Charming weather. Sent eight trains to the
 Old Fort for Fish; the men about the Fort employed in cut-
 ting & hauling Fire wood, building Stable &c.

Wrote Mr. Oxley in reply to his Letter: vizt.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 25th Jan., 1821.

MR. J. OXLEY,

SIR,

I yesterday received your note of 23rd Inst. requesting
 permission to retire from the Service in Spring, on the plea of
 indisposition; the note in question is couched in very different
 terms, to your verbal communication of 20th Inst., as in that
 conversation you demanded a passage as a matter of right,
 alleging that the period of your services with the Honble
 Hudson's Bay Coy. was entirely optional to yourself; that
your Friend Mr. Garry told you so, and that you had a docu-
 ment in your possession which could prove it, and by virtue
 thereof you would justify your conduct to the Govr. in Chief
 or Committee: in a former conversation as far back as the
 17th November, you intimated that the length of your stay in
 this country was entirely at your own discretion as you had
 told the Gentlemen of the Committee, that you would remain
 no longer than you considered your services useful to the Coy.;
 if that was the case, it was certainly a very liberal way of doing
 business on your part, but it did not follow that you was to be the
 judge of those services: at length by way of evading the neces-
 sary explanations on those Official points, you discover that

Indisposition will be an easy mode of getting clear of this January
troublesome engagement and thereby (without the risk of 1821
incurring the displeasure of the Patron who introduced you
to the Committee of the Honble. Hudson's Bay Co.) cancel
an agreement which you entered into with me to accompany
Mr. Brown to the Rocky Mountain; but it unfortunately
happens that you have mis-timed the objection; had it been
made in Spring it might not have been looked upon as a sub-
terfuge, but it now has very much the appearance of nothing
more or less than a capricious whim because our viands are
not of such quality as suits your palate and you have run your-
self into a foolish misunderstanding with Mr. Brown that your
dignity will not suffer you to compromise, on the whole
your statements have been so contradictory on the subject of
your agreement, the promises made to you by Mr. Gar[r]y,
Mr. Halket's Friendly remarks, and your verbal arrangements
with Mr. Smith the Secy., that I feel it a point of duty to de-
mand the perusal of your contract, or any document you may
have on the subject, and if such document confirms your verbal
assertions, you shall have a passage as a matter of course, but
if no such document is produced I must defer giving any an-
swer to your Letter of 23rd Inst. until the state of your health
is perfectly ascertained in Spring, and I trust your complaints
have not taken such deep root but that Four months care and
attention will remove them.

I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

The above letter I delivered to him personally and requested
he would lay aside his stiffness with Mr. Brown and the other
Gentlemen at Table, as misunderstandings in our small
society could not fail of being prejudicial to the interests of the
concern; about an hour after it's receipt he came into my room,
threw the Letter on the Table and insisted in a very abrupt
and peremptory manner on an answer to his Letter; I declined
giving any other reply than that contained in the above until
the Spring; he got warm on the subject, made a variety of

January 1821 impertinent observations which I shall take no notice of as they were made unguardedly and in the heat of passion, I however told him that while I had the honor of representing the Company I should not allow him or any other man, however dignified in his own estimation to indulge his caprice and private feelings to the prejudice of our Employers; here the matter rested until nine O'Clock P.M. when I received the following note from him, vizt.

FORT WEDDERBURN,

MR. GEORGE SIMPSON,

SIR,

The injures you have been so active to esteablish against my characteer in your Letter of this day Claiems an explenation & Satisfaction both to my Honour & the ranke I hold in his Majisty's servis; when your present duty will admit, until then I have no Clam, I am, Sir, Your Obedt. Servt.

(signed) J. OXLEY.

To which I made the following reply on the impulse of the moment. vizt.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 25th Jan., 1821.

MR. J. OXLEY,

SIR,

Your impertinent and ridiculous note of this Evening shall be treated with the sovereign contempt it merits. Your Honor & rank in his Majesty's Service are quite immaterial to me and all I require of you is to do your duty faithfully as a Clerk in the Service of the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy. I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

At present I shall make no other comment on this subject than that if the Govr. in Chief or Committee does not take prompt and effectual means to check such impropriety of conduct as Mr. Oxley has in this case exhibited, it is quite impossible for

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any Gentleman to conduct the business on a salutary footing, January
as it throws his authority into utter contempt and is subversive 1821
of good order & discipline, without a strict observance of
which the trust reposed in him is perfectly nugatory. Re-
ceived the following Letter from Mr. Back, vizt. [fo. 87]

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 24th Jan., 1821.

GEORGE SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

You will render a particular service to the Expedition by conveying to Fort Wedderburn, some of the pieces left behind last summer at the different Posts of your Company. Those which will be most required, are, a case of Tea, a Roll of Tobacco, a Keg or half a Keg of Powder and a bag of Duck Shot ; or such other as we may have. I imagine the N.W. Canoes will bring in a sufficiency of clothing for us.

I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. BACK, R.N.

26th, Friday : Cold boisterous weather and snowing the greater part of the day. Received eight trains fish from the Old Fort. Three men building the Stable, the others providing Firewood &c. &c. Wrote the following Letter to Mr. McVicar, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 26th Jany., 1821.

ROBT. McVICAR, ESQRE., }
Gt. Slave Lake. }

DEAR SIR.

I had the pleasure of receiving your much esteemed and interesting communication of 4th December by Neil McDonald, and that of 22nd by Mr. Back. The full and explanatory statement you have given me of the Compys. affairs [fo. 88] at Gt. Slave Lake is very satisfactory, and merits my best acknowledgements; by it I am put in possession of much useful information which I hope to turn to the advantage of the District and prevent a recurrence of those evils of which you

January 1821 so justly complain. I am much gratified by your Œconomical and judicious arrangement with the Indians and entertain sanguine hopes that they will this year exert themselves and make handsome returns ; what you lack in means you will no doubt make up in fair words and promises and I have little doubt that Fort Resolution will turn out as many Packs as Fort Providence.¹ You may without endangering your veracity assure them that we shall be abundantly supplied with goods next season and be enabled to equip as many as feel inclined to join our cause, in short you must keep up their spirits and confidence in us, by lowering our Opponents in their estimation.

It was fully intended that the Grand River² should have been established last season, but through some unfortunate mismanagement or neglect it was found impracticable; arrangements are now however made which I think leave no doubt of that desirable object being carried into effect this year, and by the extension the Compy. are now determined to give to their Trade both to the Northward and Westward, the annihilation of our implacable enemies cannot be protracted beyond another year. The exertions and judicious preparatory arrangements you made for the establishment of McKenzie's River are extremely praiseworthy and merit the highest encomiums, and altho' we could not avail ourselves of them I trust that it will not damp your zeal, but that you will continue to make such preparations for that Expedition as your knowledge of the country & natives may dictate. Mr. Andries from his experience is considered a fit man to establish it, and with the assistance of some active Officers will I think do very well; he has already secured two Hunters and if you could provide three others it would be very desirable; if you could also lay up a stock of provisions for them it would be most important. I am extremely sorry to learn that your prospects of subsistence are so gloomy, but trust your Hunters

¹ Simpson makes here a happy play on names, Fort Providence being a N.W.C. post at Great Slave Lake and Fort Resolution being a H.B.C. Fort in the Great Slave Lake district.

² I.e. The Mackenzie River.

will exert themselves, and that your Fishery is more productive than when you wrote; if you can but hold out for this season, the District will not suffer in future from a want of Twine to prepare Nets in sufficient time as the supplies are to be forwarded early from Norway House or the Depot and a two years stock of thread provided, indeed the same precaution is applicable to all our Fish posts and the necessary provision must be generally made. It is with deep concern I observe that your stock of Ammunition, Rum, Tobacco, & Cloth is so limited, as I fear we shall not be enabled to give you a supply of those articles until the arrival of the canoes in the Fall, we have barely sufficient ammunition and Tobacco for the use of this District and of Rum and Cloth we are totally destitute, the former article so bare that we cannot even send a quart of Spirits to our Fort Hunters until we get a supply from Isle ala Crosse, and the latter so low that we cannot furnish the Equipments of our Summer inland men: this being unfortunately the real state of the case I must just leave it to your own good management and not even venture an advice. The Committee are anxious to render every facility and assistance to the 'Discovery Expedition' consistent with the safety of their Trade, but that is not to be sacrificed on any consideration, I therefore regret exceedingly that you have given Mr. Back such a liberal supply as I fear it will expose you to very serious difficulties; that Gentleman seems to think that every thing must give way to his demands, he sent me a most extraordinary requisition with which I could not comply, it must however be perfectly understood that altho' the Company are anxious to meet the views of those Gentlemen, their necessities are a very secondary consideration to our own difficulties; we have already done more for them than was either required or expected by Lieut. Franklin, and if the fate of their mission depended on it we must not loose sight of our own Interests to promote their views. A proper degree of subordination I am glad to find is at length gaining ground amongst our people all over the country, and the report you give of your men is very satisfactory; the Half Gentry (a useful class of people if kept at a respectable distance) are however not in such a state of discip-

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January line as could be wished, they must by degrees and good
 1821 management be brought to a sense of their duty; they have not yet ventured to declare themselves beyond the peal of authority, and while I have the Honor of representing the Coy. in Athabasca they shall never be permitted to treat their superiors with so much disrespect as they have hitherto done. St. Germain is out of a bad nest, and I trust we shall soon be able to shake off this Fraternity. I expect a few attached English Half-breeds into the country next season and then we shall be more independent of N.W. renegadoes. I hope you have renewed the engagements of those Servants whose Contracts are expired, if not have the goodness to fix them as early as possible and on the most Economical terms; our people have hitherto been accustomed to a certain amount in wages, and a variety of Extra's such as 'habiliments,' Tobacco, Dogs &c &c. I am anxious to expunge these after claps as they not only create great confusion in our accounts, but in many cases amount to considerably more than the additional wages they are likely to demand, I have therefore in the few engagements already made confined them to a given sum and the usual Equipment; to prime Boutes I offer 1600 Livres and the best Middlemen 1200, altho I have been under the necessity of giving 1300 to a few of the latter. These extravagant terms I do not offer generally as I expect at least one Hundred men from Canada in Spring, but it was necessary to secure a few of the best men to guard against disappointment. If you can engage your people on lower Terms let the whole be fixed but even to the first rate men we cannot offer more than what is already given.

[fo. 89] Masta and his woman would I think be a useful couple for the Grande River, and I shall be glad if you can engage him for that destination, also, Thibeault in the capacity of Fisherman, and Gt. Slave Lake will be supplied with Orkney Fishermen. Cayenne Grogne's Contract I believe expires in Spring, he was engaged at Montreal as a Boute, with the promise of advancement, but his services are now absolutely required as a Guide for the Grand River, and his Wife is a good Interpreter; you will therefore have the goodness to fix him for three years in that capacity, he will of course expect a considerable

advance of Wages, and rather than loose him we must give January
 from 16 to 1800 Livres but as much lower as possible; his 1821
 allowance of luxuries it may be optional to him either to have
 separately or to mess at the Table; the old man is rather of a
 capricious disposition, you will therefore take him on the sub-
 ject of his contract at some interval of extraordinary good hu-
 mour and let the instrument be executed on the impulse of the
 moment before he has time to reflect on the importance of his
 Services: I wish you could make up a match between his
 Daughter and Neil McDonald, she speaks French, Cree &
 Mountainy fluently, and we can depend on her as an Interpreter
 while under Neil's protection:—it is probable the old man
 may talk of marriage and a Settlement, you must endeavour to
 make these matters palatable to him by fair promises as we
 have no Clergymen in this Country.¹

I have promoted Neil McDonald to the rank of a Clerk with
 an advance of Saly. for a term of three years in consideration of
 his good conduct and faithful services, and I am satisfied that
 by a continuance of his zeal and activity, he will prove himself
 worthy of the encouragement given him. I know that he is
 your right hand man and that his Services are very important to
 you, otherways I would have kept him here as we much re-
 quire a few spirited determined characters at present. The
 N.W. are more formidable here this season than usual, and I
 expect when the running season commences we shall have a very
 hot and animated opposition; Keith, Black & S. McGillivray
 are the Leaders, they have a host of Bullies, Outlaws & Des-
 perado's of all descriptions, and outnumber us fully by one
 third: I think however we shall make a tolerable stand, our
 cause being good inspires confidence and they mistake their
 customers if they expect to have matters entirely their own way.

¹ Apart from Roman Catholic missions, the first clergyman to settle in the
 H.B.C.'s territories was the Rev. John West, M.A. (b. 1775? d. 1845), whom
 the H.B.C. appointed Chaplain to the Red River Colony in 1820 and who
 remained there until 1823. Cf. especially B. Heeney, *John West and his Red
 River Mission*, Toronto, 1920, and West's own *Substance of a journal during
 a residence at Red River*, London, 1824. For 'Indian Marriages' cf. *supra*, p.
 41, n. 1.

January 1821 Accept my best thanks for the open, manly, and unconditional tender you have made of your Services which I accept with feelings of the highest satisfaction. Messrs. Brown & Miles have fully explained to me the situation in which you stand in regard to Salary, and altho' I cannot take upon myself to act retrospectively I beg to assure you that my best exertions shall be used to settle the matter to your entire satisfaction: the Govr. in Chief is moreover inclined to meet your views and if the matter is represented to the Committee I am satisfied that you will have no cause of complaint, however in order to set aside all doubt in regard to the ensuing year, I hereby guarantee to you the Sum of £150 for the year ending Spring 1822. I was unacquainted with the particular circumstances of the case previous to leaving the Depot, otherways the business would have been cleared up, but if any further explanation is required with the Committee or Govr. on the subject, I shall go fully into it; and I cannot for one moment doubt that the result will be perfectly agreeable to you; pray therefore give yourself no further uneasiness on the subject and be assured that my best exertions shall be used for your interest. I am glad to learn that Mr. McAulay's co-operation has been useful to you; that Gentleman has certainly been very unfortunate, but from all I can learn it cannot be imputed to a want of zeal and attachment to the interests of his Employers; altho' I have not as yet entered into any formal contract with him, I fully understand that he renews his agreement for a term of three Years, and if correct in that supposition I intend that he shall relieve you in the charge of Gt. Slave Lake District as early in the Spring as you can get away, he has had a great deal of experience in that quarter, knows the resources of the country and the disposition of the Indians, so that there is little doubt of his managing the business satisfactorily; this arrangement I think will meet his views and I trust not be unpleasant to you. Mr. Brown leaves this place in Spring, for the Mountain, and I do not know any Gentleman so fit to conduct the business as your good self, I shall therefore be glad if you will relieve him in the management thereof; it is now on a more regular footing than it has hitherto been and from the alterations and arrangements

I propose making it will altogether be a more comfortable place: in the event of my returning to Athabasca next season this will in all probability be my head quarters and with your assistance I think the affairs of this District will assume a very different appearance to what they have hitherto done. I am desirous that Neil should remain with Mr. McAulay during the summer, as he will be of great assistance to him, and if his services are considered necessary here in Winter he can get up in the Fall or by the first Ice, but this I shall arrange with you at meeting. January 1821

Baleau I understand is a good Runner and fit for the situation of Guide, if he can be engaged on moderate terms let him be fixed for two or three years, at all events let him come out in your Brigade as it is probable I shall have to send him back from Norway House in charge of the early Canoes. My intention is to leave this place by the first open Water not later than the 25th of May, and being very anxious to see you previous to my departure, I have to request that you will come on by the last ice; your *traps* can follow in the Brigade which I hope will be ready to start by the first open water, I cannot detain the other Brigades until it's arrival, but St. Dennis will be left to conduct it. Let Cayenne Grogne take his passage in the Canoes, as it is probable he will have to go to Isle ala Crosse in Spring, his Wife & Daughter would be an incumbrance, you must therefore persuade him to leave them at Slave Lake. I think six men besides the Officers will be sufficient for the summer establishment. As our Brigade will be off before your Canoes get this length, and that it will be necessary they make an expeditious march, I shall not expect the Salt required in Article 9th of my Instructions; the detention would be great and I see the importance of forwarding the Gt. Slave Lake supplies earlier than usual. Pray let the utmost care be taken of your provisions, we shall be very short of that article here and I expect your Brigade will bring sufficient to maintain the people to Portage La Loche going out and from hence back to Gt. Slave Lake in the Fall. We are much in want of Dogs and if you can purchase on moderate terms a few good Breeding Bitches for the Coy. to come [fo. 90]

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January up in the Canoes they would be very useful.—With much
1821 esteem, I remain, Dear Sir,

Your most Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

27th, Saturday : Sent Eight trains to the Old Fort for Fish. Mr. Perring accompanied by Cochrane & Bibeau arrived from Lac La Loche with a Keg of Rum, two rolls Tobacco and some Canadian Belts part of the Goods sent for to Isle ala Crosse in the Fall. They bring Letters from Mr. Clarke Dated Isle ala Crosse 15th Octr. from Mr. McLeod Lac La Loche 7th Jany. and from Mr. Greill Berens House 17th Jany. By Mr. Clarkes Letter it appears that we can expect but little relief from Isle ala Crosse this season. The Compys. affairs are I am glad to learn by Mr. Clarke's account in a prosperous state in that quarter and he seems to keep his opponents at a respectable distance: he informs me that Mr. Heron has not succeeded in providing Horses for Portage La Loche; this is a serious disappointment and will be attended with much inconvenience. By Mr. McLeods Letter it appears that his post at Lac La Loche has been wretchedly supplied with goods and men notwithstanding Mr. Clarke's ample means: there seems to be some culpable neglect in the arrangement of the affairs of that District: in making up the Outfit for Lac La Loche, Powder which is the main spring of the Trade was entirely overlooked, the consequence was, that about 40 Indians remained at the Post until a supply was brought from Isle ala Crosse and in the interim they consumed all the Fish that was secured in the Fall for their subsistence during the winter, and since that period Mr. McLeod and his people have been actually starving: half the number of men required for such an extensive Post were not furnished, Mr. McLeod was therefore under the necessity of sending two of the best men belonging to this District away with Indians and using a Keg of Powder and cask of Rum absolutely required for this place: Mr. McLeod ascribes the detention of the Canoe and men sent from here in the Fall to the lateness of the season, and the probability of the River and Lake being fast before they could reach

Athabasca, but I understand that the virtual cause was : that the services of our people were required there in consequence of Mr. Clarke's inattention to his business. Mr. McLeod is considered a very interested valuable Officer, and if he does not succeed I am satisfied it will not arise from want of exertion and zeal on his part but from the inadequacy of his means. In my remarks of 7th September it will be observed that Mr. Spence (Father to Mr. Clarke's woman) was left in charge of Isle ala Crosse during the summer, and there appeared to be a great want of system in the arrangement of it's affairs which is in some measure confirmed by the following paragraph in Mr. McLeods Letter, vizt.:

January
1821

'He (Mr. Clarke) seems inclined to lay all Old Spence's mismanagement last summer to my charge and find fault with all my doings, however, I am resolved should I loose every copper of my wages not to serve another year under his jurisdiction.'

I understand that Mr. Clark has drawn about $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the Athabasca Lake Indians to Isle ala Crosse by his unbounded extravagance, and I may safely predict that the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ th will desert this establishment next Season if decided measures are not taken to prevent his following up the present lavish system. Mr. O'Doherty is not yet arrived, I imagine he waits the return of Mr. Grignon from Isle alà Crosse with the Packet who is now daily expected, he refused to accompany Cochrane & Bibeau as he considered the provisions furnished by Mr. McLeod insufficient for the Journey; Mr. Perring however knowing the difficulties under which we laboured volunteered to lead the party; from Berens House they had only three days provisions with which they might have made a shift, but unfortunately they were all strangers to the Route and did not arrive here until the tenth day nearly exhausted with hunger & fatigue, having lived upon a starved dog for five days; the Keg of Rum & one of the Rolls of Tobacco were left on the Route being unable to bring them on. Nothing worthy of remark had occurred at Beren's Ho. since Mr. Greill's Letter of 13th Inst. Mr. Back favoured me with a visit this afternoon.

28th, Sunday : The weather mild and a fall of Snow in the

January evening. Boucher & St. Denis started early this morning for the
 1821 Keg of Rum and brought it home at 8 p.m. Neil McDonald and Delonee gone for the roll of Tobacco to the Athabasca River.

29th, Monday: Received a supply of Fish from the Old Fort. Neil McDonald returned from the Athabasca River, he could not find the roll of Tobacco. The Carpenters employed fitting up bed places in the Hall. Our House is in such a delapidated state that two or three men are almost constantly occupied in repairs and alterations; it will be necessary to build a new dwelling House next summer as that which we now occupy is almost uninhabitable. The weather continues fine.

30th, Tuesday: Fine clear weather. Sent two men in search of the Roll Tobacco and for Sled Timber. Clouston with six trains gone to the Old Fort. Dumaine & Obechon returned from Harrisons House, with some Furs and provisions: by them Recd. a Letter from Mr. Andries Dated 19th Inst. requiring a supply of Ammunition, Rum & Tobacco as his stock is entirely exhausted; he has been visited by several bands of Indians who had Furs and Provisions, but having no goods to give them in exchange, they Traded the whole with our Opponents, who are well provided with Goods, Interpreters, men & dogs so that we have not a chance with them, indeed we labour under the same disadvantages at every post
 [fo: 91] in this Department. The Harrisons House Indians have heard of Mr. Clarke's liberality, and in order to come in for a share of the spoil are flocking to Isle ala Crosse in large bands; they say that there will not be a Chipewyan in this District next season, and it is evident that if a simultaneous Œconomical arrangement is not entered into all over the country, the Trade must be inevitably ruined: at present the Compys. Interests in this District suffer more from opposition in their own service than the hostility of our avowed Enemies and while the Masters of Districts or Departments thus continue to look upon each other in the same concern with Jealousy and as competitors it is quite impossible that the business can prosper: the only effectual mode of removing that party feeling which is so pernicious: is in my humble opinion that both Isle ala Crosse and Lesser Slave Lake should be comprised in the Athabasca

Department, and put under the charge of one Superintendent capable of it's management;¹ on the present footing Gentlemen unfortunately look more to Self importance than the general Interests of their employers which are sacrificed and neglected. January
1821

31st, Wednesday : The Weather extremely cold. Clouston returned from the Old Fort with six trains of Fish. McDougald & Laserte arrived from the C  che's with 500 lbs of Moose Flesh and a few Dressed Skins; the Fort Hunters continue unsuccessfull and intend removing to the banks of the Athabasca River. Wrote the following Letter to Mr. McAulay, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *31st Jany.*, 1821.

AULAY McAULAY, ESQRE., }
Great Slave Lake. }

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your esteemed communications of 4th & 22nd Decr. p Neil McDonald & Mr. Back which afford me much satisfaction. By Mr. McVicar's Letters I am glad to find that your assistance has been of material importance to him, and with your joint exertions I entertain sanguine hopes that Gt. Slave Lake will this year do wonders. I am happy to learn that you have abandoned the idea of retiring from the service, and that you are willing to renew your contract for a term of three years; the proposition I made both in my conversation previous to your departure and in my Letter of 26th Septemr. was £120 p annum for 3 Years with all the priveleges of a District Master which I understand meets your views and is accepted; if that construction of your Letter is right I shall be glad if you will relieve Mr. McVicar in the charge of Gt. Slave Lake District in Spring, as I have appointed that Gentleman to the management of the affairs of this District; from your experience and knowledge of the Indians together with the handsome Outfit that will be provided for that District next season, I feel satis-

¹ This suggestion was not carried out. After the amalgamation between the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. in 1821 Ile-  -la-Crosse was included in the English River District while Lesser Slave Lake formed a district of its own.

January 1821 fied that the Compys. affairs must prosper under your management. If Neil McDonald's services are considered necessary during the summer he will remain until we are enabled to send the requisite number of Officers to your assistance. Mountain Island must be established next season as a provision Depot for the Grand River & Gt. Slave Lake Districts and I think I have secured a Gentleman very capable of managing it, his Wife¹ being a native of that part of the country and extensively connected amongst the Chipewyan and Yellow Knife Tribes.² I trust you will render every facility in your power to the Grand River Expedition and make such arrangements as you and Mr. McVicar may consider necessary; he is fully in possession of my views in regard to the summer arrangements for Gt. Slave Lake and will communicate with you thereon. Inclosed I beg to hand a Letter to which I request your signature in the event of your concluding on the proposed terms which you will have the goodness to return me p first opportunity and will answer all the purposes of a formal contract. With best wishes, I remain,

Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

February 1821

February 1821 *1st, Thursday*: The frost very intense. Our people variously employed about the Fort and preparing to go to the meat Caches Tomorrow.

2nd, Friday: It was intended that Clouston with six trains should start for the meat Caches this morning, two Trains for Sled Timber to the Rivierre Embarras and two Trains for fish to the Big Island, but the cold was so piercing that the

¹ G. P. Andries' wife, cf. pp. 136, 396.

² An Athapaskan tribe hunting in the country north east of Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake. Their dialect, appearance and customs were hardly distinguishable from those of the Chipewyans, with whom they merged after 1823, when the Dogribs (who had been long oppressed by them) massacred most of the Yellowknives.

people cannot venture out. McDougald & Laserte returned February from the Rivierre Embarras with two loads Sled Timber, they 1821 could not find the Roll of Tobacco.

3rd, *Saturday*: None of our people employed to day on account of the severity of the weather.

4th, *Sunday*: The weather continues bitterly cold. Sent six trains to Lac Clear for Buffaloe Meat accompanied by Clouston; and three to the Big Island for fish.

5th, *Monday*: The weather still very cold. Sent two Trains to the Rivierre Embarras for Sled Timber & in search of the roll of Tobacco left by Mr. Pering in the Athabasca River. Wrote the following Letter: vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 5th Feby., 1821.

— WEANTZELL,¹ ESQRE.,
Expedition. }

SIR,

Altho' I have not the pleasure of being personally acquainted with you, I trust the subject on which I am about to communicate will be a sufficient apology for now troubling you. The high and honourable character you have uniformly borne in this country and your ability as an Indian Trader are well known to me, and as I understand you have some idea of again turning your attention to the Fur trade upon the expiration of your present engagement, I take the liberty of intimating on behalf of the Honble. H.B. Coy. that I shall be extremely happy if you will undertake the management of an important [fo. 92] branch of their affairs in this Department. Being unacquainted with your views I cannot in the present stage of the business even hint at terms but you may depend on my best exertions to meet your wishes and if you will favor me with a confidential communication on the subject I shall take an early opportunity of entering more fully thereon. I am with respect,

Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

¹ Willard Ferdinand Wentzell, cf. Appendix B.

February 1821 Mr. Weantzell has been for many years a very confidential Servant of the N.W. Coy. and repeatedly offered a share of the business, his character is unexceptionable, and he is considered one of the best Traders in North America; his influence amongst the Northern Indians is so great that he was selected by the Gentlemen of the Expedition to conduct and introduce them to the Natives. I understand from Mr. Back that the N.W. Coy. are desirous that he should rejoin them, but as his services would be most important to the Honble. H.B. Coy. in establishing McKenzie's River or any part of the country to the North of Gt. Slave Lake I have been induced to open a communication with him on the subject. Recd. the following note from Mr. Back, vizt.:

FORT CHIPEWYAN, *5th Feby.*, 1821.

GEO. SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

I have been anxiously expecting for several days past an intimation on your part of fulfilling your promise—I mean 'the additional supply.' If you do intend further assistance, you will oblige me by mentioning it in direct terms, as I shall consider any deviation as mere equivocation and quite foreign to my request. I have to desire also that you will order the people who are to convey our Goods to Slave Lake, to be fully prepared by Wednesday Night as I intend commencing my Journey early on Thursday Morning. I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) G. BACK, R.N.

To which I made the following reply: vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *5th Feby.*, 1820 [sic].

GEO. BACK, ESQRE.

SIR,

I am favored with your note of this date and in reply have to inform you that the articles promised for the use of the

expedition are in readiness to be forwarded and have been so ever since the 4th Ultimo and will be delivered to your order at Slave Lake on demand. The expected supplies from Isle ala Crosse alluded to in my Letter of 4th Ulto. have not come to hand nor have I received any communication from that establishment of a later date than the 15th Octr. so that it is quite uncertain whether Mr. Clarke can furnish them or not, and if you will take the trouble of referring to my correspondence I think you will find that any promise made of further assistance is qualified with the proviso of my receiving the expected supplies from Isle alà Crosse, those supplies have not come to *hand* and I am sorry it is not in my power to make any addition at present to the list handed you on the 4th Ultimo. If you will be pleased to refer to my former remarks on this subject I think you will find that I have not in any instance amused you with 'equivocation' but that my observations have been directly to the point.

I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

In answer to the above received the following note, vizt.:

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 5th Feby., 1821.

GEO. SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

Your note of last years date (1820) I have just received and in justice to myself I must inform you that I need no prompting as to references or any former correspondence. This I know—that you have had several arrivals during my residence here and I imagine they were not all empty. I am informed this day that the N.W. Gentlemen have it not in their power to convey the whole of our property to Slave Lake; there being an overplus of one piece, which I desire you will order to be taken on your sleighs. I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. BACK, R.N.

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February To which I made the following reply, vizt.:

1821

FORT WEDDERBURN, *5th Feby.*, 1821.

GEO. BACK, ESQRE.

SIR,

The object of my referring you to former correspondence was to correct an error into which you appear to have fallen in regard to my promises of additional supplies. The arrivals you allude to have no connection with the Goods expected from Isle ala Crosse and your conjecture that 'they were not empty' is perfectly just, but I presume you will give me leave to know the purposes for which they are intended. If your piece does not exceed 60 lbs wt. and is sent here before 9 O'Clock p.m. Tomorrow it will be taken by the people who start for Slave Lake on Wednesday Morning.—I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

About six O'Clock p.m. Mr. Grignon arrived from Isle ala Crosse which place he left on the 6th Jany.; his delay arose from the scarcity of provisions at Lac La Loche & Berens House and on that account our goods could not be removed from the former place which is a most serious disappointment. Mr. Grignon is the Bearer of the Fall Packet from York Factory; by it I have the honor of receiving a very satisfactory communication from the Govr. in Chief Dated 1st Septemr. which conveys the pleasing information that arrangements are in progress for putting the affairs of Athabasca on a respectable footing next Season; Goods, men & Canoes will be provided in abundance and he means to adopt the measures I took the liberty of suggesting to him in my communication of 16th Augt. The Governor is very justly incensed at Mr. Clarke's injudicious arrangement of the Athabasca affairs this season

[fo. 93] at Norway House in appropriating such an unreasonable number of Men, Canoes, & Goods to the District under his own charge thereby totally neglecting and ruining our prospects in Athabasca, I am however glad to learn that he has 'given

Mr. Clarke positive orders to supply me with any goods I may find necessary to apply for.' February 1821

Govr. Williams transmits, the melancholy accounts of the Earl of Selkirks death which must be deeply lamented by all who knew his Lordships inestimable virtues and is by none more so than the inmates of Fort Wedderburn. Mr. Bunn hands me the Depot accounts of year 1819/20 which appear correct;¹ it is necessary that these accounts should in future be received here earlier in the season, otherways it is impossible that the Books can be made up agreeable to the instructions of the Honble. Committee; indeed, I am apprehensive that the Peace River accounts will not be completed this season, as we have no opportunity of forwarding the prices & charges. I am favored by communications from Mr. Clarke Dated 26th Decemr. 1st & 6th Jany. which are very unsatisfactory; he informs me that I need not depend on any assistance from him towards establishing McKenzie's River in Spring; he also gives me to understand that a sufficient quantity of Pemican cannot be provided for the Athabasca Department next season and that from Govr. Williams's remarks he does not feel justified, in re-engaging his men: on those points I must address him without delay, as they threaten the business of this Department with alarming consequences. Mr. Archd. McDonald assures me that he will be in readiness to accompany Mr. Andries to McKenzie's River next Season. Mr. McLeod of Lac La Loche writes me under date 16th Jany. that he is unable to forward our Goods & men on account of the scarcity of provisions. O'Doherty pleads Guilty to the charge of making free with the Spirits under his care:—and Mr. Greill of Beren's House renews his application for a supply of Goods, men, and dogs. I cannot here omit remarking that Govr. Williams's polite and friendly attentions to myself individually merit my best thanks and acknowledgements.

¹The 1819-20 accounts for the Athabaska department were prepared by Robert Miles and are now MS. H.B.C. B. 39/d/4^a. An account book of Fort Wedderburn for the same period is now MS. H.B.C. B. 39/d/4^b. The department's accounts for the following year, now MS. H.B.C. B. 39/d/5, were also kept by Robert Miles.

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February 6th, Tuesday: Pleasant Weather. Wrote Mr. Back the
1821 following note, vizt.:

'Mr. Simpson presents Compts. to Mr. Back, has the satisfaction to inform him that the Isle à la Crosse Express is arrived and is the bearer of a Packet addressed to Captn. Franklin which will be disposed of as Mr. Back may be pleased to direct.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 6th Feby., 1821.'

Received the following answer, vizt.:

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 6th Feby., 1821.

GEORGE SIMPSON, ESQRE.

SIR,

I have the infinite satisfaction of acknowledging the rect. of your note, than which nothing could have given me greater pleasure. You will oblige me by giving the Packet to my Servant. Respecting your favor of yesterday P.M. I can only add that we are at opposite extremes in our opinions & that it was dated from (Fort Chipewyan).¹ The piece weighs 60 lbs. and will be sent you in the course of the day with a list of what it contains and during the afternoon I shall do myself the pleasure of waiting on you when I will sign the rect. for our Goods. I am, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. BACK, R.N.

Wrote the following Letter to Lieut. Franklin, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 6th Feby., 1821.

JOHN FRANKLIN, ESQRE., Commr. of the Northn.)
Expn. &c. &c. &c. Fort Enterprize.² }

SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your communications of 18th Octr. & 28th Novr. by Mr. Back on the 2nd Ultimo.

¹ It appears that Simpson had dated his letter (cf. p. 254) from the wrong fort as well as under the wrong year.

² Erected at Winter Lake, between the Yellowknife River and the Coppermine River, by Wentzell for Franklin, September 1820.

That Gentleman I learn has received a supply of articles most required by the Expedition from our Establishment at Gt. Slave Lake and to such an extent as is likely to injure the Compys. business in that quarter, it will however be gratifying to the Committee, that even to the sacrifice of their own interests they have been able to render you such important assistance. Mr. Back has also made a considerable demand on me which I should have great pleasure in satisfying had it been in my power, but he is fully aware of the very limited means now at my disposal and I can only regret my inability to contribute more to your relief than the few articles herewith sent. Your Letters addressed to Mr. Barrow¹ of the Admiralty and Mr. Williams shall be forwarded by the first opportunity and Mr. Back's request that a few pieces may be conveyed in the Athabasca Brigade of next season for the use of your Expedition will be duly attended to.

I am respectfully, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Wrote the following Letter to Mr. McVicar, Gt. S. Lake, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *6th Feby.*, 1821.

ROBT. McVICAR, ESQRE.²

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 26th Ultimo to which I beg reference. Neil McDonald's detention I fear has put you to inconvenience but the satisfaction of receiving your accounts and public and private communications will no doubt compensate the extra trouble and fatigue you must necessarily have undergone through his absence. Our packet did not arrive until last night altho' an Express was sent for it to Isle ala Crosse so far back as the 1st of Decemr., and I regret to say we have as yet received no supplies from that quarter, a few trifling articles excepted. My English Letters

¹ John Barrow, afterwards Sir John Barrow, Bart., was second Secretary to the Admiralty from 22nd May, 1804, to 10th February, 1806, and again from 1807 until 28th January, 1845.

² This letter reached Fort Resolution on 21st February, 1821.

February 1821 bring the Melancholy accounts of the Earl of Selkirk's Death on the 8th of April at Pau in the South of France which has deprived society of one of it's brightest ornaments, and all who knew his worth must regret the event most sincerely. You will be glad to learn that the affairs of the Settlement are not likely to be materially injured by this melancholy event as it is warmly and strenuously patronised by Gentlemen of the first rank and ability in the Kingdom. I have the satisfaction [fo. 94] to inform you that arrangements are making which will enable us to do Business in Athabasca on a Grand Scale in future; the N.W. are to be opposed at all quarters; and both at home and in the Lower Country the affairs of our Honble. Employers are in a most flourishing state. Have the goodness to be very particular in the arrangement of your accounts according to the new form; Mr. Miles will hand you ample materials. Herewith I send you a few English Newspapers which will no doubt be a treat; also a few interesting documents relative to the affairs of our Opponents who are on the verge of destruction.

Neil will hand you a medal which you will be so good as [to] deliver in great form to your principal Chief, with an appropriate Speech. ¹ I shall expect the pleasure of seeing you in Spring with such a List of Packs as will bear evidence of your ability and exertions.

Meantime I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

¹ The ceremonious presentation of medals to Indian Chiefs was long regarded by the H.B.C. as a valuable means of attaching their tribes to the Company's interest. As early as 1776, the officer in charge of Fort Albany, observing the importance attributed by the Indians to articles having a symbolical significance, suggested the sending out of medals as presents to chiefs who had exhibited special loyalty to the Company. In 1793 the Rainy Lake Journal contains an entry to the effect that one of the chiefs visiting the post wore a silver medal with the King's bust on the obverse side and the Company's coat of arms on the other. The medals distributed by Simpson were designed by C. H. Kuchler, a Flemish artist in the employ of the Soho Mint at Birmingham. They bore on the obverse side the bust of George III and on the reverse the coat of arms of the H.B.C.

Sent five trains for Fish to the Big Island. Taite the Fisher- February
man arrived from thence, the Stock on hand is now reduced to 1821
about 1000 and not more than 30 to 60 taken p diem. Mr.
Back favored me with a visit in the evening.

7th, Wednesday: Weather as yesterday. Received a supply
of Fish from the Big Island. Directed Taite to work six nets
of large mesh for New Caladonia.

8th, Thursday: Severe Frost and very cold. Sent Tait and
six trains to the Fishery. Mr. Back paid me a visit preparatory
to his departure; from his remarks I infer there is little prob-
ability of the objects of the expedition being accomplished,
not so much on account of any serious difficulties to be appre-
hended, but from a want of unanimity amongst themselves;
indeed it appears to me that the mission was projected and
entered into without mature consideration and the necessary
previous arrangements totally neglected; moreover Lieut.
Franklin, the Officer who commands the party has not the phy-
sical powers required for the labor of moderate Voyaging in
this country; he must have three meals p diem, Tea is indis-
pensable, and with the utmost exertion he cannot walk above
Eight miles in one day, so that it does not follow if those
Gentlemen are unsuccessfull that the difficulties are insur-
mountable. I cannot say that they have stood neutral in the
existing differences between us and the N.W. Coy., on the con-
trary they evince a strong party feeling and consider themselves
no where at home except in a N.W. Fort where they harangue
the Indians, and these speeches are interpreted by Halfbreed
McGillivray's & McTavish's to our prejudice; Mr. Back's ser-
vant I understand has even been employed as a spy on our pro-
ceedings when sent with notes or messages from Fort Chipewyan.

9th, Friday: Fine weather. Neil McDonald & Perrault
started for Gt. Slave Lake; Mr. Back also took his departure
from Fort Chipewyan for the same destination. Received a
supply of fish from the Big Island; our Stock at the Canadian
Fishery¹ is considerably lower than we calculated on instead of

¹ Probably the Old Fort fishery which may have been called Canadian
because of its being on the site of the old Fort Chipewyan which was a N.W.C.
post before it was abandoned.

February 1500 the quantity on hand does not exceed 400 so that we
 1821 must study Economy in the true sense of the word. Wrote
 the following Letters to be forwarded by Mr. Oxley to Isle ala
 Crosse, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 9th Feby., 1821.

JOHN CLARKE, ESQRE., }
 Isle ala Crosse. }

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure to acknowledge rect. of your anxiously looked for and esteemed communication of 15th Octr. p Mr. Pering on the 27th Ultimo, and those of the 26th Decr. & 1st & 6th Ultimo p Mr. Grignon on the 6th Inst.

1st. Accept my best thanks for your attention to my request of 22nd Septr., had the goods come to hand, much expence, inconvenience and trouble would have been avoided, your promptitude however in returning the canoe merits my best acknowledgments and if Mr. McLeod had been more decided in his measures it would have been satisfactory. O'Doherty's conduct has been shameful and he must have his deserts: of the whole party Cochrane & two men are yet only arrived; Mr. McLeod it appears has detained three men, and O'Doherty did not find it convenient to leave Lac La Loche where it appears five pieces still remain. These pieces are absolutely necessary for the safety of the Athabasca Trade and without them it is very doubtful that we can collect our Credits, I do therefore entreat that in the event of Mr. McLeod being unable to forward them, you will give Mr. Oxley the means to bring them hither with the least possible delay. Your Knowledge of the Country, Trade, and our difficulties together with the interest you must feel in the general cause will I am confident stimulate your exertions on the present occasion.

2nd. I fear there has been some unfortunate misunderstanding relative to the Pemican necessary for this Department, and on reference to our memorandum of arrangements I find that we shall require the full quantity agreed upon say Ninety bags for the specific purposes therein mentioned, ten bags will moreover be necessary to meet contingencies, I shall therefore

write Messrs. Pruden, Heron & Lewis¹ on this subject, and February
will leave their Letters open for your perusal in order that you 1821
may impress on those Gentlemen the necessity of complying
with the request. It is of course understood that the quantity
alluded to (say 100 Bags) is intended for the use of the Atha-
basca Department alone and to be reserved for that purpose
accordingly. The twelve bags intended for the maintenance of
the people from this place to the Portage I hope you will be
able to forward by the last ice to Lac La Loche, and a Canoe
will be sent for it from Berens House by the first open Water ;
the Twenty bags required from Lac La Loche to Isle ala Crosse
should I think be also hauled on the ice, but this must be left to
your own good management, the first Brigade will leave this
place not later than the 26th or 27th of May.

3rd. If there is any doubt that Mr. Heron can furnish
Horses for the Portage, I beg to recommend that two of the
four you have at Isle ala Crosse should be sent, as Govr. Wil-
liams informs me that the Boats will to a certainty be for-
warded; I shall depend on your furnishing a Vehicle for the
Transport across the Portage, also the assistance of two men [fo. 95]
for the repairs of the Road, in addition to the two I send from
hence; the Officer in charge of Lac La Loche can superintend
the Operation, and if you can provide a Fisherman for the
maintenance of the party, it will be important, as our Fisheries
are so precarious here in the early part of the Summer that I
cannot with any degree of safety spare either Men or Nets for
that purpose.

4th. I regret exceedingly that you are unable to give any
decided assurance of supplies for McKenzie's River, Mr.
Grignon has however brought a verbal message which leads me
to hope that your assistance may still be calculated upon, as
there was a probability that the Trade of Lac La Ronge would
not require the quantity of goods intended for that post. Mr.
Andries & Kayenne La Grogne will at all events be in atten-
dance here early in Summer to proceed if you can furnish the
means and perhaps you will be able to resolve this point either

¹ The officers in charge at Carlton House, Edmonton, and Lesser Slave Lake
respectively.

February by the return of Mr. Oxley or by the Pemican Canoe in Spring.
 1821 In your next have the goodness to favour me with your ideas as to the Posts you would recommend being established with your reasons for selecting such points. When I wrote you in the Fall it was intended to have established Mountain Island, but on looking more particularly into the state of our magazines I found it was impracticable; it is however absolutely necessary to have it settled this year as a provision Depot for the McKenzie River & Gt. Slave Lake Districts, and you have cleared up Pering's character so perfectly to my satisfaction,¹ that I have engaged him for that Post and his Wife in the capacity of Interpreter, I understand she is extensively connected amongst the Yellow Knife and Chipewyan Tribes in that quarter, and is likely to be most useful in introducing and securing to us the confidence of the Natives; the N.W. have hitherto been the entire Masters of that part of the country and of course have great influence over the inhabitants, but this woman will be enabled to remove any prejudice that our Opponents may have instilled on their minds against us. I did intend to have requested that you would fix this couple for that destination, but Perings unexpected visit has enabled me to settle the matter without troubling you on the subject.

5th. I am both surprised and concerned to learn that you have not Govr. Williams's permission to re-engage your people; is it not possible that you may have misunderstood his instructions on that head? from his remarks to me on the subject of the Northern Expeditions which I conceive to include Isle à la Crosse I infer that he intends to follow up with the utmost rigour the advantages already gained, for that purpose it is necessary that a sufficient number of men is provided, and in order to obviate a repetition of the loss and inconvenience sustained last year at the Depot in consequence of so many people being out of their Contracts, I should hope that you may still feel justified in renewing the engagements of your best men and I have no hesitation in recommending it very strongly; this I do without any authority, knowing the importance of the

¹ In a letter written to Simpson on 15th October, 1820, MS. H.B.C. B. 89/b/1, fo. 19^r-20^r.

measure and if you are inclined to act upon it I have no doubt but we shall be able to explain the matter to the Governor's entire satisfaction. The people belonging to this District whose Contracts expire in Spring are very extravagant in their demands, yet to avoid the risk of disappointment in our expectations from Canada I have engaged about $\frac{2}{3}$ rds of them, at 1300 livres to our best Middlemen and 1700 to prime Boutes with the usual Equipment, but have expunged all Extra's, and if you can secure your most valuable men at those terms for Genl. Service or at a reduction of 200 livres for Isle ala Crosse (the extra labour & hardships our people are liable to making fully that difference) I think you cannot do wrong; your influence with the Canadians is so great that I am aware no Gentleman in the service can do business with them on such advantageous terms, I therefore think you should set about it without delay, as if it is postponed until their arrival at the Depot they must have their demands however extravagant. February 1821

6th. I find that nearly all the Indians belonging to this District are migrating to Isle ala Crosse, they have heard of your unbounded generosity and unless you take effectual measures to prevent it we shall not have half a dozen Chipewyans in Athabasca next season; the withdrawing those Indians who are already attached to our cause from one District to another must evidently be injurious to the Trade and it is scarcely necessary to remind you that we are not sent here to oppose each other but our avowed Enemies. Permit me therefore to recommend that you do not give any encouragement to the Athabasca Indians to desert their usual hunting grounds as by so doing they must unavoidably defraud us of those advances given them at this place; several of our Credits were last year Traded at Lac La Loche, which is paying twofold for their commodity and must consequently be a losing Trade; a standard price should in my opinion be agreed upon for Goods & returns between Athabasca & Isle ala Crosse, and until that plan is established and acted on, the Trade of either the one place or the other must be sacrificed.

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February 7th. Pray dispatch Mr. Oxley with the least possible
 1821 delay, the Goods expected by him are three Kegs Spirits,
 1 Keg & 11 lbs Powder, and the Dry Goods specified in
 your List, if you can in any way make up another piece
 it would render us material service; whatever men or dogs
 he may require for the transport of those Goods I beg
 may be furnished with an abundant quantity of provisions
 for their Journey to Beren's House as I fear they cannot
 depend on a supply from Lac La Loche. I remain, Dear Sir,
 Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 9th Feby., 1821.

JOHN P. PRUDEN, ESQRE., }
 Carlton }

DEAR SIR,

I understand from Mr. Clarke that the Govr. in Chief has restricted the quantity of Pemican intended for the use of this department to 45 Bags, there certainly must be some misunderstanding on this point as on minute calculation I find that one hundred Bags will scarcely be sufficient; it is probable that Mr. Heron may have instructions to furnish the remainder, but if he does not I must entreat the favour of your providing the quantity required say 100 Bags which by the annexed statement you will observe is absolutely necessary; the evident urgency of the case together with this official request will I hope sufficiently justify the measure on your part; a disappointment will be fatal to our prospects in the North.—Have the goodness to write Mr. Heron saying what quantity you can furnish in order to regulate his proceedings and let the accompanying Letter for that Gentleman be forwarded without delay.—You will oblige me particularly and render an important service to this Department by forwarding with the utmost dispatch by Mr. Clarkes men a Keg of Rum & 40 lbs of Powder for the use of this District; our stock of those articles is quite exhausted and it is to be apprehended that the interests of the Comy. will suffer materially if

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you do not comply.—I remain, Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. February
Humble. Servt. 1821

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Appropriation of 100 Bags Pemican required for the Atha- [fo. 96]
basca Department, vizt.:

- 12 bags from Fort Wedderburn to Portage La Loche
- 20 „ on the Portge. and from thence to Isle ala Crosse
- 28 „ from Isle ala Crosse to Cumberland
- 15 „ for McKenzie's River
- 15 „ for New Caladonia
- 10 „ for hauling Goods from Isle ala Crosse &c

100 Bags Pemican required solely for the use of the Athabasca
Department.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 9th Feby., 1821.

FRANCIS HERON, ESQRE., }
Edmonton }

DEAR SIR,

By the following extract of a Letter I have this day written to Mr. Pruden you will perceive that there is some misunderstanding relative to the supply of Pemican intended for the use of this Department. I am unacquainted with the Govr. in Chief's instructions to you on this head, but from my remarks I have no doubt that you will see the propriety of furnishing the additional quantity required. Mr. Pruden will inform you the number of Pemicans he means to supply and I have to request the favor of your making up the quantity to 100 Bags and forward the same across Moose Portage in order that Mr. Lewis may convey it to Isle ala Crosse in Spring. Herewith I send a Letter to Mr. Lewis on that subject which I request you will forward, a copy thereof is also annexed. With reference to my Letters via Peace River of 26th Septr. & 7th Decr. I remain Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

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FORT WEDDERBURN, 9th Feby., 1821.

JOHN LEE LEWES, ESQRE., }
Lesser Slave Lake }

DEAR SIR,

By information received from Mr. Clarke, I have reason to apprehend that a larger quantity of Pemican than usual will this season be necessary from Moose Portage in consequence of the very limited supply expected from Carlton. In all we shall require for the use of this Department one Hundred bags, part of which will be hauled by Mr. Clarkes people and the remainder will be furnished by Mr. Heron to whom I have written on the subject, and I have to request the favor of your conveying to Isle ala Crosse whatever quantity he may provide for Athabasca. A disappointment will be attended with the most serious consequences which I have no doubt you will endeavour to avert. I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 9th Feby., 1821.

JOHN McLEOD, ESQRE., }
Lac La Loche. }

DEAR SIR,

I am favored with your esteemed communications of 28th Decr. & 7th & 16th Ultimo, the last came to hand by Mr. Grignon on the 6th Inst. the unfortunate detention of the Fall Canoe has put us to most serious loss and must subject you to great inconvenience; all that now can be done to remedy the evil is to forward our goods with the utmost dispatch; Mr. Oxley goes to conduct the party as O'Doherty cannot be trusted and I have to request the favor of your rendering every facility in your power. The pieces remaining at Lac La Loche are 3 Kegs Rum, 1 Powder, & 2 Containing Cloth &c all which, I trust you will be able to forward without delay; if through scarcity of men, provision, or dogs, you cannot send the whole until you receive supplies from Isle ala Crosse pray

let the cloth and part of the Rum be forwarded with the February utmost dispatch, O'Doherty to take charge of the cloth and a 1821 confidential man with the Spirits in lieu of one of the three detained. In the event of Mr. Oxley being unable to proceed to Isle ala Crosse through fatigue or otherways, pray send the Letters on and he will wait the return of the Express at your place; O'Doherty I understand has got Dogs, if he does not choose to come on send the Dogs without consulting him. The Keg which was tapped by O'Doherty have the goodness to fill up and charge the deficiency to this Post. I do not think it will be necessary to build on the Portage; the Gentleman who remains at your post during the summer will Superintend the repairs of the Road. Pray let the utmost care be taken of the Pemican intended for this Department, I expect 32 bags will be hauled to your post before the Lake opens. Mr. Perring & his wife are engaged for this Department & I shall expect them here by the return of the Pemican Canoes in Spring. I remain, Dear Sir, Yours &c.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

10th, Saturday. Severe weather. Dispatched Mr. Oxley, [fo. 97] Perring and one man to Isle ala Crosse for Goods & with the Letters written yesterday; sent a man with them to Pierre au Calumit for the purpose of hauling meat to the Fort. Clouston returned from the Fort Hunters with three train loads of Buffaloe meat. Our people employed in Sawying, Cutting Firewood, making Trains, Snow Shoes &c. &c.

11th, Sunday: Nothing worthy of remark, the Weather fine.

12th, Monday: Sent six trains to the Big Island for Fish. The men about the Fort employed as formerly. Fine clear weather but very cold.

13th, Tuesday: The weather as yesterday. Received six trains of Fish from the Big Island. Mr. McDougald and three men arrived from Harrisons House with the vexatious accounts that Mr. Andries and our people are starving at that Post; when McDougald started there were not more than 100 Fish in Store, and Mr. Andries, his Family and five men had nothing to depend on for subsistence but a precarious Trout

February 1821 fishery with hooks and lines, his dried provisions were exhausted and he has no prospect of a fresh supply; this misfortune arises, first, on account of his being unable to avail himself of the Fall Fishery in consequence of the Twine arriving at too late a period to make Nets, and before they were prepared the Fish had abandoned that part of the Lake; and secondly on account of the Indians being withdrawn from that neighbourhood to Isle ala Crosse so that he was unable to lay up a stock of provisions. These evils might be easily averted by proper management, but until the affairs of the country are looked into with attention (which has never yet been the case) we must expect a recurrence of them, indeed it appears extraordinary that they are not more frequent. It certainly never could be intended by the Honble. Committee that their own Servants at Isle ala Crosse should oppose those in the same employ in Athabasca; that however is the fact and the prime cause of our misfortunes this season; no sooner have we put down our common enemy the N.W. Coy. than a more formidable one appears in Mr. Clarke and he gives the finishing blow to the Trade both of Isle ala Crosse & Athabasca; one of his expedients to draw the Indians from Athabasca has succeeded and annihilated our prospects at Harrisons House effectually; he engaged an Indian (who he very appropriately named 'Serjt. John' ¹) to recruit among our Indians; this Officer is equiped with a handsome suit of clothes, pistols, dirk, & double barreled Gun (a Joe Manton ² by description) and tells the Indians that he is sent by Mr. Clarke for them, there is a Bounty offered for each recruit and they are told that all who join Mr. Clarke will be similarly rewarded; such flattering prospects are sufficient to delude more enlightened beings than the Chipewyans; they take the Bait, Rob the Company of the advances made them in the Fall, hasten to Isle ala Crosse, neglect their hunts, leave poor Andries and his people to the

¹ This Indian has not been identified.

² Joe Manton was a famous maker of flint-lock guns in the early part of the nineteenth century. His guns were worth about seventy guineas in England and must have been highly treasured in Canada. He was the first gunsmith to join the two barrels of a double-barrelled gun together with a fillet.

miseries of Famine, contract debts at Isle à la Crosse which they can never repay, and if they do hunt the number assembled in that vicinity must totally extirpate the breed of valuable furred animals in that part of the Country; and all this is done to gratify Mr. Clarke's vanity and thirst for popularity, without taking into consideration or giving one thought about the sacrifice & ruinous consequences. Mr. Andries altho he has not a particle of goods will not abandon the post while there is a possibility of keeping soul & body together; he acted very judiciously in sending these people off; there is a small band of Indians still in his neighbourhood, and he intends if the fishery does not improve to send the remainder of his people here, and he will himself join this band, accompany them in their hunts and bring them to this place on the opening of the Navigation. Mr. McDougald and his men were reduced to the necessity of eating their Parchment Sled Wrappers and would in all probability have perished had they not met the English Chief who directed them to a cache of meat. This addition to our establishment places me in an awkward predicament as our provisions cannot hold out until the fishery improves, I have therefore determined on sending part of our men away in search of their own subsistence with hooks and lines; there is a Trout fishery at Point de Roche about 36 miles from hence where it is probable they may get sufficient for their maintenance & I have directed Mr. Chastellain, Lamallice & Cochrane with their Families to prepare to accompany the people in the course of a day or two as we cannot afford to keep them here. Received three trains of meat and the agreeable intelligence that our Fort Hunters have killed five Buffalo about three days march from hence.

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14th Wednesday: Charming weather. Sent Cochrane to the Big Island for the purpose of superintending the Fisheries; Bouche and three men gone for fish, and two trains started for meat. Mr. Chastellain & Lamallice complain that themselves & families are so unwell that they cannot go to Point de Roche, I therefore directed them to be in readiness to take up their residence at the Big Island tomorrow, which they agreed to do with much reluctance, however towards Evening Chastellain

February solicited my medical advice to his wife who he said was dan-
 1821 gerously ill; on entering the room she attempted a tragic scene but the cheat was so palpable that it did not take, he has however made a variety of excuses which have obtained him a short respite:—Lamallice's Wife next paid me a visit and said if she was permitted to remain at the Fort, her Family would not require any allowance for 20 Days; it appears that in anticipation of a scarcity of provisions this thrifty amazon has out of the Rations served to her family (even when the Officer's mess was on short allowance) laid up a stock of about 200 fish; I have therefore permitted her to remain.

[fo. 98] *15th, Thursday* : Fine weather in the early part of the day and a good deal of snow fell towards evening. Sent six men to the Point de Roche with hooks and lines to find their own subsistence: the dogs reduced to half allowance say one instead of two fish p day:—Received three train loads from the Big Island, our stock is reduced to about 500 and the Nets produce from 100 to 150 p diem; the consumption there is about 50 and at the Fort 150 so that our prospects are by no means cheering. Bouche the Interpreter returned from the Big Island, he informs me that he called on 'Rondeau' ¹ the Fisherman (his Brother in Law) accompanied by one of our men at the N.W. Fishery; while there he observed Black and two men travelling very quick towards the House, and being unarmed he considered it judicious to retreat which he effected previous to his arrival, Black however overtook the man who accompanied him, called Bouche a D—nd Rascal and said he would make a prisoner first opportunity.

16th, Friday : The weather stormy with snow but mild. Sent three Trains to the Big Island for fish. Grignon, Bouche and five men gone to the Fort Hunters with a supply of ammunition Rum and Tobacco and for meat to the Cache's; they are about $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 days march from hence; Grignon & Bouche had 24 lbs meat each for the Journey which the former in a most insolent manner said was insufficient and treated Mr. Brown with every mark of disrespect, talked of breaking his agreement, &c., &c., this Gentleman must be humbled, there

¹ Cf. p. 204, n. 1.

is a balance of about £100 due to him which appears in February jeopardy. Our Stock of fish is so low that we are obliged to 1821
serve out animal food to the people to day.

17th Saturday : Fine mild weather. Received four trains fish from the Big Island; our Stock is now reduced to 150 not more than one days allowance for our people, the consumption will however be less for some days as the greater part of them are gone to the meat C  che's. Black has this afternoon taken up his quarters at the Watch House which portends a Row.

18th, Sunday : The weather remarkably fine. Sent McDougald and two trains to the Old Fort and Big Island with Hooks & Lines for catching Trout and in order to make some arrangement with the Fisherman. Two Trains gone to the Meat C  ches.

19th Monday : Charming Weather. I understand that ' The Son of the White Partridge ' an Indian who is supposed to have assassinated ' O'Keveny ' has taken up his quarters with his Friend Black at The Watch House, a very amiable pair of neighbours certainly! The few men about the Fort variously occupied.

20th, Tuesday : Fine clear weather. Received a packet from Peace River containing Letters from St. Mary's to 16th Jany., and from Colvile House to 13th Inst. Mr. Finlayson's communication is very satisfactory. My anxiety about Giasson & his party is most agreeably relieved, he arrived at St. Mary's on the 4th Novr. from the Rocky Mountain: he was received with open arms by the natives who are very desirous to see us established among them; they did expect our Canoes last fall and reserved all their Hunts in Furs and provisions for us until the season was so far advanced that all prospect of arrival was at an end. Mr. Giasson encountered many perils and difficulties but the satisfactory reception he met with compensated all; the Country abounds with Beaver, so much so, that they almost entirely subsisted on the Flesh of that animal, which they shot & caught in Traps. With the few Goods he had and the hunts of his party he made and Traded seven Packs Beaver which he was compelled to leave *en c  che* in the Mountain as his provisions were nearly

February exhausted, they will however be taken to Fort de Pinnette in the
 1821 course of the winter; his journal gives no information worthy of remark. It appears that the N.W. had used every means to prevail on the Natives to murder Giasson and his party; Ferris & McDougald (the latter formerly a Clerk in the Honble. H.B. Coys. Service) were the instigators. Provisions may be had in abundance if precautionary measures are taken, the country abounds with animals & the Rivers & Lakes with Fish. Mr. Giasson has selected two advantageous situations for posts which he has lined out and marked H.B. Coy. as having been taken possession of in their behalf. Had our Expedition gone in this season well equiped the returns would have been handsome: 50 to 60 Packs. Mr. Giasson whose services are of the utmost consequence to us at present has made up his mind to visit Canada this season, and the Iroquois had not come to terms with Mr. Finlayson when he wrote. Mr. Finlayson's prospects at St. Marys are flattering; he has got a tolerable stock of provisions and his Indians appear industrious so that I hope for good returns from thence. Mr. Yale has also the prospect of doing well at Fort de Pinnette. Mr. Finlayson I regret to find has determined on retiring to the Lower Country in Spring; the fact is that many Gentlemen brought up at the English establishments are so much accustomed to ease and luxury compared with those in the Athabasca Department that they cannot reconcile themselves to the change. Mr. Thomas discovers that his services are absolutely necessary and is determined to bring them to the best market, he will remain on no other condition than an advance of £50 to his Saly., which I fear must be given. Mr. Heron has rendered us great assistance by his ready compliance with my request of 26th Septr. but I regret to find that he cannot furnish the number of canoes required: Mr. Lewis of Lesser Slave Lake on the contrary will in no shape administer to our wants; it appears that the Trade of St. Mary's does partially interfere with that of Lesser Slave Lake, which is at times unavoidable from the contiguity of the Posts and the consequence is that Mr. Lewis looks on Mr. Finlayson as an Opponent which is very evident from the following emphatic

remark in his Letter in reply to an application from Mr. February
 Finlayson for a supply of Goods: 'indeed if I had abundance 1821
 it would be the greatest folly in me to give you a stick to break
 my own head with.' This inconsiderate observation is
 sufficient to show the spirit of opposition that exists, and the
 propriety of Lesser Slave Lake being comprised in the Atha-
 basca Department; as it is now situated I have no more con-
 troul over Mr. Lewis than over his N.W. opponent Mr.
 Stuart: by these remarks I do not mean to detract from Mr.
 Lewis's merit as to do that Gentleman justice I believe him to
 be as zealous, active, and interested an Officer as any in the
 service. Our affairs at Colville House are in a regular Train,
 Mr. Laronde is picking up a few skins and hopes to make
 better returns than the Post has hitherto produced. Re-
 ceived a Note from St. Picquè the N.W. Bully apologising
 for his abrupt departure on the 19th Ultimo; also a note from
 'O Hara' giving the following hint: 'Mr. Simpson pardon [fo. 99]
 me for putting you on your guard, you are going to be at-
 tacked subsequent to Mr. Back's departure.' These notes are
 dated from Fort Chipewyan 9th Feby., but no opportunity
 occurred of delivering them until to day. St. Picque had a
 stolen interview with Frizie (one of our men)¹ in the woods this
 afternoon and directed him to caution me against Black &
 McGillivray who have some dangerous plot in contemplation;
 Such a confederacy as Messrs. Black, McGillivray & 'The
 Son of the White Partridge' of murderous notoriety, aided by
 Keith's crafty advice require a strict look out and stronger
 means than we are now possessed of, Messrs. Brown, Miles &
 Clouston being the only three now in the Fort that I could
 depend on for support in the event of an attack.

21st, *Wednesday*: The weather continues remarkably fine.
 Sent two Trains to the Big Island for fish accompanied by
 St. Denis the Guide, and Bernard who are to proceed to Point
 de Roche, the former for the purpose of seeing the fishing
 lines carefully set; hitherto they have been unsuccessful as
 the Wolves take them up very adroitly in the course of the night,
 destroy the lines and make a prize of fish, baits and hooks, it

¹ Ignace Lebeau, called Frizee, a Canadian middleman.

February 1821 is therefore necessary to fix the end of the line securely under the ice to elude those crafty and ravenous animals. Mr. O'Doherty has at length made his appearance accompanied by Gagnon, they left Lac La Loche with one of Mr. McLeod's men and three pieces goods on the 1st Inst., but on the second day of their march, they were obliged to leave a Keg of Powder *en cache* owing to the weakness of their Dogs: Mr. McLeods man was knocked up at Berens House where he remained & O'Doherty and Gagnon started from thence with one piece, a Keg of Rum which they left in the Rivierre Embarras, being unable to bring it further; they have been wandering about the Lake, for four days as they could not find their way to the Fort: two of their dogs died on the Track through starvation, and the men came here in a famished state having eat nothing for five days. By Mr. O'Doherty I have a few lines from Messrs. McLeod & McDonald which give no information of any interest.

22nd, Thursday: Severe weather. Mr. McDougald started early this morning to the Rivierre Embarras, and brought home the Keg of Rum left by O'Doherty. Received two trains fish from the Big Island. Blondin & Dumaine arrived with about 270 lbs meat all that remained in a C  che of two Moose Deer; they suppose it was robbed by some of the N.W. people.

23rd, Friday: Blowing hard with intense frost. Sent two Trains to the Big Island for Fish. Received 220 lb Buffaloe Meat from a C  che near Lac Clair.

24th, Saturday: the weather continues severe. Received two trains fish from the Big Island. The N.W. must be equally short of provisions as we are, several of their people having been sent from the Fort to procure their own subsistence. Wrote the following Letters to be forwarded by the Peace River Express, vizt.;

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821.

DUNCAN FINLAYSON, ESQRE., }
St. Marys. }

DEAR SIR,

The receipt of your full, particular and interesting communications of 15th & 16th Ultimo has afforded me great

pleasure and relieved me of much anxiety. Nothing can be more gratifying than the satisfactory accounts you give of the Mountain and the prospects in Peace River District: I had long ago made up my mind that such zeal, activity and good management as you possess could not fail of producing the natural consequences, handsome returns. From Mr. Giasson's report I am happy to find that our prospects are most flattering in the Mountain, it is to be deeply lamented that we had not the means of settling it last season, it will however beyond all doubt be handsomely done in the course of this year. The Govr. in Chief assures me that no pains or expense will be saved in establishing us on a firm and respectable footing in that valuable country. The Iroquois must be engaged without delay, I shall not limit you to terms, we absolutely need their services and you will therefore make the best bargain you can: Mr. Giasson informs me that he intends returning to Canada next fall, this is a sad disappointment and I trust you will be able to dissuade him from it; he knows the value of Money, you will therefore have the goodness in addition to other arguments to hold out such tangible inducements as you may find necessary; I shall write him a few lines and with regard to terms you will be regulated by my Letter of 7th Decr. to which I beg reference. It is intended that Mr. Brown leaves this place about the 10th of June accompanied by Four Iroquois (Boutes) besides Canoe men, Fishermen and Officers to the number of sixteen or seventeen in all, he will embark Eustace & Tête Jaune ¹ at St. Marys where Grand Pierre ² will remain until the Canoes arrive about the middle of August, in order to conduct them to the Interior; let every other Servant belonging to the Company come out in the Spring Canoes, except those absolutely necessary for the summer establishments. It was intended that you should have debited Peace River District with all the supplies of New Caladonia and taken credit for them on delivery; it is necessary that Mr. Brown should have a good stock with him and I trust the goods ori-

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¹ Two of the 'Free' Iroquois siding with the H.B.C.

² Not identified.

February 1831 ginally intended for that destination are reserved; pray let me have a list of them by the Canoe that precedes the Brigade; do me the favour also to get all the Leather that can be collected at St. Mary's, Fort de Pinnette & Colville House made up into Winter Shoes; the Cargo Leather to remain untouched. I shall write Mr. Lewis requesting a supply of such articles as we stand most in need of which you will endeavour to get conveyed to St. Mary's in the course of the spring. I am rejoiced to learn that Mr. Yales goes on prosperously at Fort de Pinnette which with care and attention will be a valuable Post both for skins and provisions, it cannot be under better management and I hope you will be able to renew his contract as he is a young Gentleman in whom we can repose the utmost confidence.

[fo. 100] I regret exceedingly that you have suffered so much on account of the incapacity of your men; they are however a very fair sample of the Company's servants in this Department who appear really to be the very dross and outcast of the human species, you could not however expect that all the best men would have been sent to St. Mary's as other Districts are also subject to occasional difficulties. At this moment we have no less than ten men strolling about the country in quest of their subsistence as we cannot maintain them here, and those about the Fort are half starved, your sufferings are therefore imaginary when compared with ours. With regard to engaging the men you will be regulated by my remarks on that head of the 7th Decr, to the Prime Boutes and best Middlemen I have given 17 & 1300 Livres without any Extras such as habiliments, Tobacco, Dogs &c. Every inducement should be held out to the Free Canadians to join our cause as we depend on them in a great measure for provisions and whatever promises you make them must be fulfilled. Secure Glandeau's¹ provisions without delay, McIntoch² of the N.W. has got his daughter and as Blood is thicker than water it may be well to

¹ Probably a freeman settled near St. Mary's, Peace River. It is possible that he was the same person as the freeman Gladeau (cf. *supra*, p. 103, n. 2) or a relative of his.

² William McIntosh, cf. Appendix B.

have the Tureau ¹ in Store. If Baptste. Bisson insists on going to the Depot, he must have a passage, altho' his services are much required inland during the Summer; the Anvil will be ready for him in Spring, it cannot be now sent, you will therefore make some excuse to him about it. I am surrounded here by a parcel of the veryest miscreants under the Sun, Black, Keith, McGillivray and their infamous associates, so that my presence is absolutely necessary, you must therefore keep the natives in good humour and say that I will assuredly winter with them next year, my Visit would also be attended with an expense which our means cannot afford as they would expect presents, regales &c. Herewith I send a Medal which you will give to the principal Chief from me with an appropriate speech in full state. As you say nothing about Mr. Miles I presume his services are not required. I shall write Mr. Heron about the Horses and if he cannot supply you it will not be necessary to send those required in my last: it is important that an abundant stock is kept up at St. Mary's and on that point I shall come to some arrangement with our Saskatchewan Friends in Spring. It is with much concern I observe you have determined on retiring from the Athabasca Department in Spring, your services are no doubt of importance in any part of the country but no where so much so as at St. Mary's and before you have finally resolved let me entreat that you will endeavour to alter your plans; the work of reform you have commenced would be accomplished in another year which could not fail of not only giving yourself much satisfaction but also be highly gratifying to the Honble. Committee who shall be informed to whom the merit is due: but if your resolves are unalterable we must just sacrifice the amount which Thomas seems determined on having; £150 is too high a price for his services but as we are in a corner there is no alternative, it must be given; I shall write him a few lines and leave the final arrangement in your hands; do not let him see these remarks. If Mr. Bourassa's demands are not extravagant let him be also en-

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¹ A rawhide sack to hold pemmican. The term is derived from the use of the buffalo bull hides for the purpose. The word is used frequently, as here, for pemmican itself.

February 1821 gaged for three years if possible. Your Garden I am glad to find was productive, but it is very unfortunate that the Potatoes have been injured by Frost, pray let the utmost care be taken of all seeds and give directions that they are put into the ground after being sufficiently prepared in due Season; Have the goodness to bring a few seed potatoes and a little Barley here in Spring as we must turn our attention to agriculture, and if Colvile House and Fort de Pinnette could be also supplied it would be of the utmost consequence: in the event of your stock of seed being insufficient Mr. Heron has abundance. The Colvile House, St. Marys & Fort de Pinnette expenses must be comprised in one account and that can be done by you only, you have merely given Mr. Miles the supplies of St. Marys, it is therefore impossible for him to divine what the other two Posts have had; he can only charge the Peace River District generally with the list you handed him when here in the Fall; had all the materials been sent he would have saved you the trouble of making up the Books. I have particularly examined the charges, they are all correct, the Keg of Salt cost us the sum of £3 Sterling calculating the expenses incurred on procuring it which is the only possible way of coming at the price. The sum of £503 2s. 6d. is to a fraction your proportion of the Brigade Expenses, this is made up from bona fide vouchers which you are at liberty to inspect. If you will take the trouble of making up a note of charges for the Canoes furnished by Peace River (to this District & Gt. Slave Lake say 6) it will have credit for the amount as a matter of course. We do not charge you with Sails, but there is an item of 100 Yds Sheeting which is correct, that quantity being used in packing the Peace River Bales, making Sails &c. You cannot wish to saddle Athabasca Lake District with the outstanding debts of Peace River; if those Debts have been remitted by Mr. Robertson, Peace River must certainly sustain the loss; he no doubt adopted that measure for some good reason. The Nails were manufactured from New Hatchets, Ice chissels &c., $2\frac{1}{3}$ p Cd. is therefore a moderate price; if you had sent Rod Iron I would have made you a present of Clouston's labor, or if you had thought of Nails at the Depot or

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while here in the Fall it would have saved Mr. McBeans shoulders. Any School Boy can bring Halifax Curry. into Sterling, you will therefore find no difficulty in making up the Canadian Accounts.¹ Give yourself no uneasiness about the affair of the N.W. Deserter, I have had three such and feel no anxiety on the subject, I regret however to learn that the poor man lost his life in the cause; your conduct in the business was just as it ought to have been.² It is necessary that I make an expeditious voyage out I am therefore anxious to have a good Canoe and men fit for their duty. Grand Michelle is my favourite Steersman, have the goodness therefore to use your influence with him, and if Josè³ goes out let him also come down, but if neither of them engage, let Laurant come with Charlo, I shall expect them here not later than the 20th of May. I hope Magnion will have a sufficient number of Canoes, and that you will start them from St. Mary's as early as possible; after seeing them off pray make the utmost expedition to this place, as it is desirable that we should go out together; I shall wait for you here until the 25th but not later. I have asked Mr. Laronde to make a few Canoes, but you cannot depend on him as there is no birch rind within a great distance of Colville House; we did expect 14 Canoes from Mr. Heron but I find we have only to calculate on six from his place. None of the Beaver Indians can be taken to the Depot this season, these visits are attended with much expense and inconvenience, you may however say that the Hunter who produces most skins next season will have that indulgence which may have the effect of animating their exertions. I think you should lose no time

[fo. 101]

¹ Goods were largely sold, and Canadians' wages paid, in Halifax currency; accounts were made up in sterling. cf. *supra*, p. 186, n. 1.

² The three deserters to whom Simpson alludes were St. Picquè, O'Hara, and the one who came from Ile-à-la-Crosse with Rocheleau, but whose name Simpson does not give (cf. pp. 231-2). The deserter whose death he here discusses was Le Jojè, who had quarrelled with Colin Campbell and taken refuge at St. Mary's, Peace River. The H.B.C. sent him to the encampment of an Indian called "The Bull", along with two H.B.C. men. On their way back to Peace River Le Jojè fell ill and was left at a small encampment on Smoky River. Here he was later found dying by Guidon, an H.B.C. servant, on 23rd December.

³ Not identified.

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February 1821 in forwarding an Express to Lesser Slave Lake & Edmonton as we depend much on assistance from those places. It is necessary to build a New House at this place next season, I am therefore apprehensive that we cannot spare a Carpenter. If there is no probability of your getting this length before my departure, pray write me fully by the Light Canoe, giving the number of Packs, state of Posts & Officers & Men engaged &c.—With best wishes I remain

Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821.

JOHN LEE LEWES, ESQRE., }
Lesser Slave Lake. }

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 7th Inst. *via* Isle ala Crosse to which I beg reference and your particular attention, a copy thereof is annexed. It is with much regret I learn from Mr. Finlayson that you have rendered him *NO* assistance which has seriously injured our prospects in Peace River; it is possible that the Trade of Lesser Slave Lake and St. Marys may occasionally interfere with each other and that trifling losses are sustained through the roguery of Indians and Freemen, but altho' you do belong to different Departments it should be recollected that we are all labouring in the same Vineyard, and that our utmost exertions should be united for the Genl. interest of our Honble. Employers, let me therefore entreat that nothing like internal opposition should influence your conduct towards Mr. Finlayson, but that you render him every assistance in your power as I am satisfied that he will make no demands that he can possibly avoid. Inclosed I beg to hand you a list of articles which are particularly and actually required for the Summer Trade of the Rocky Mountain District; without them it is impossible that Mr. Brown can proceed in Spring and unless he is there to lay up a stock of provisions previous to the arrival of the fall Canoes it would be madness to attempt establishing it next

Season; you therefore see the importance of complying with this demand, on the contrary you are aware of the serious and inevitable consequences, I cannot therefore for a moment doubt that you will furnish Mr. Finlayson with this assortment on demand; from all I can learn of the Trade of Lesser Slave Lake this season there is no question as to your ability, and knowing the urgency of the case I am satisfied that your zeal in the general cause will prompt you to meet our views as far as possible. Do me the favour to bring out a Keg of gum for us in your Canoes & if the Gt. Slave Lake Brigade touches at the Salt Springs you will have the same quantity of that article in return. I remain

Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821.

FRANCIS HERON, ESQRE., }
Edmonton. }

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your much esteemed favour of 29th Novr. a few days ago, and have now to return my best thanks for your prompt and friendly assistance to Mr. Finlayson, which has been of very essential importance to the welfare of Peace River District and I trust has put you to no inconvenience; had our neighbours at Isle ala Crosse & Lesser Slave Lake exhibited a similar inclination to co-operate for the general interests of the concern, the affairs of the Athabasca Department would bear a very different aspect in Spring to what they are likely to do. I need scarcely add that if Mr. Finlayson requires and you have the means of giving him any further aid I am satisfied that you will have much pleasure in doing so. There was no Bark raised at Peace River last season, I am therefore apprehensive that Mr. Finlayson cannot furnish the number of Canoes required, and it is with much concern I observe that you are not likely to be enabled to provide so many as was intended, if there is however a possibility of making up the full number it will be of the utmost importance to us and let all the materials for building you can collect be forwarded to

February 1821 Norway House in Spring as the Guides will be employed there in making & repairs while the Brigades are at the Depot. A considerable number of Horses are absolutely necessary for the maintenance of Peace River District and it is a sad disappointment that those you provided for us last season were not forwarded, I have therefore to request the favor of your procuring 20 breeding Mares & 10 entire Horses¹ as early as possible, and if Mr. Finlayson has no guide to conduct them during the Summer that you will secure one, without the assistance of these valuable animals we cannot calculate on maintaining the Post of St. Mary's. I have particularly to request your attention to my Letter of 9th Inst. via Isle ala Crosse, a copy of which [fo. 102] is annexed, also copies of my Letters to Mr. Lewis & Mr. Pruden on the same subject and with reference to my communication of 7th Decr. I remain Dear Sir, Yours &c
(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821.

MR. LOUIS DENY D'LARONDE, }
Colville House. }

SIR,

I am favored with your esteemed communications of 16th & 17th Jany. 13th Inst., which are very satisfactory, and I entertain sanguine hopes that your active and judicious arrangements will be productive of good effects. It is very important that a fishery should be established at Colville House and for that purpose I shall endeavour to provide men and nets next Season. I trust every care is taken of the provisions as we depend on a considerable stock from you for the Canoes out to Portage La Loche and from this place in the Fall to Peace River; Mr. Brown will also require a supply for two Canoes going to St. Mary's in Spring. It affords me satisfaction to learn that you are willing to renew your engagement for another year and on the same terms as last, you will therefore have the goodness to retain charge of Colville House. There are no objections to your coming down this

¹I.e., Stallions. The proportion of stallions to brood mares is absurd, judged by ordinary standards.

length with the Peace River Brigade but your stay must be very short as your presence will be required at the Post; Mr. McBean can manage the business in your absence. Pray give yourself no uneasiness about the supposed reports injurious to your character as I assure you none have been made to me, and you may rest satisfied the Honble. H.B. Coy. are in no way influenced in the opinions they form of Gentlemen by the places of their Nativity, but solely by their Department in the Service, a valuable Officer must necessarily be esteemed and it is quite immaterial whether he is an Englishman or a Canadian. I am desirous that you should engage your people without delay on the most advantageous terms, we cannot give more than 1700 Livres to prime Boutes & 1300 to the best Middlemen, if to remain inland a reduction of 200 Livres. You must make the best terms in your power with Desjarlois the Interpreter, I hope he does not expect a material advance: I understand he is a good Canoe maker it will therefore be of importance to us if you could provide a few as we cannot expect the usual number from St. Mary's and for that purpose I have sent nails. Our Stock of Powder and rum is so reduced that I shall not be able to give you a supply for the Summer Trade, but I have written Mr. Finlayson on the subject. The Flints are herewith sent. Pray let all the Leather you can provide be made up into Winter Shoes for the New Caladonia to be taken in by Mr. Brown on his way up Peace River. When the Light Canoe arrives from St. Mary's, let it be forwarded without delay and if Prevost & Blanchette are coming out send them down with Charlo. I remain Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Hble. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821.

MR. IGNACE GIASSON, }
St. Marys. }

SIR,

The receipt of your valued communication of 5th Novr. afforded me unspeakable satisfaction as from your non-

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February arrival when Mr. Finlayson formerly wrote, I was very apprehensive that some unfortunate accident had occurred to the party. Your exertions have been very great and crowned with success and I shall not fail of pointing out the importance and extent of them to the Govr. in Chief and Honble. Committee by whom they will be duly appreciated. It is much to be regretted that the valuable country you have been exploring was not established last year, you have however made a favorable impression on the Natives, and we can now enter it with perfect confidence; Mr. Brown proceeds from hence with two Canoes and all the goods we can spare early in Summer and four canoes will be forwarded from Norway House by the first open water; the Outfit will be very complete and the country established on a respectable footing so that there is no doubt of our succeeding to the utmost expectations. I am however much concerned to find that you have a visit to Canada in contemplation this season, and regret the cause exceedingly; if you could delay it for another Year it would be conferring a particular obligation and if your affairs in Canada can be arranged either by Mr. Gale the Compys. Legal adviser in Montreal or Messrs. Maitland Garden & Co. the Agents I shall write them particularly on the subject and you may depend on every attention being paid thereto. Permit me again to repeat that if you can postpone your visit until next year it will afford me great pleasure and with best wishes,

I remain, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821.

MR. CHARLES THOMAS, }
St. Mary's. }

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving your esteemed communication of 12th Ult: by which I am happy to find that you have no intention of visiting the lower country this season, you will therefore have the goodness to relieve Mr. Finlayson in the charge of St. Mary's when he takes his departure in Spring.

With regard to Salary I must leave it in a great measure to your own discretion; an advance of £25 I will cheerfully give but if you have determined on remaining on no other condition than that it should be augmented to £150 I have no alternative, as we cannot part with your valuable services at present: the Gentleman who had charge in the summer of 1819 was paid most extravagantly considering his slender abilities and took advantage of the market knowing that he must have his terms, but his contract expires in Spring, and we shall have no further occasion for him: pray do not give the censorious an opportunity of saying that you drove a hard bargain with me, and if you will allow it to stand at £125, I shall be much gratified. I shall be glad to know if you are inclined to renew the contract for 2 or 3 years & on what conditions, let me entreat you to be moderate, and I shall endeavour to meet your views. I have written Mr. Finlayson at considerable length on the affairs of the District who will communicate fully with you thereon: your prospects are very flattering and I trust you will do well during the Summer. It is a sad disappointment that circumstances prevent my visiting St. Mary's this season, but it is not improbable that I shall have the pleasure of wintering with you next year. I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 24th Feby., 1821. [fo. 103]

MR. VITAL BOURASSA, }
Colvile House. }

SIR,

I am gratified by the communications you brought from St. Mary's, and have to express my approbation of the diligence & Expedition you have used in bringing them to Colvile House & forwarding them from thence, had circumstances enabled you to visit Fort Wedderburn it would have afforded us much pleasure. Mr. Finlayson gives you a high character and I am fully satisfied that it is justly merited; young Gentlemen of your zeal and activity must get forward

February 1821 in the service, another year or two will qualify you for an important charge, in the mean time I am glad to find Mr. Finlayson intends giving you the management of a small provision post which you will no doubt conduct satisfactorily. Your contract expires in Spring and I have requested Mr. Finlayson to renew it for 1, 2 or 3 Years as you may feel inclined, the latter term is desirable as we could then place you in a permanent situation which could not fail of being more advantageous & satisfactory to yourself than shifting from Post to Post. I shall most likely have the pleasure of seeing you next Season at St. Mary's and wishing you a pleasant Journey, I remain, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

25th, Sunday: Beautiful Weather. Sent two trains for Buffaloe meat four days march from hence.

26th, Monday: Wind N.E. and cold, with a little snow towards evening. Dispatched the Peace River Packet by two men to Colvile House from whence Mr. Bourassa will convey it to St. Mary's. Two Indians arrived this evening from the Big Bubbies band who are now hunting Buffaloe about four days march from hence towards Beren's House; they have made a tolerable hunt about 160 skins of all descriptions; made up a small Outfit with which Mr. McDougald and four men are to start early Tomorrow morning: this band fell in with Charlo the Interpreter and a few Indians about two Months ago, they had been tolerably successfull and expected to make good returns.

27th, Tuesday: Mr. McDougald with four men and three trains started at five O'Clock a.m. for the Indian Tents; great caution was observed in sending them off in order to escape the vigilance of the N.W. who are continually on the alert, and for once I believe we have got to the blind side of these Argus eyed Gentlemen. St. Denis the Guide arrived from Point de Roche,¹ he says the people are starving, having caught no fish

¹ There were several Points de Roche in the vicinity of Lake Athabaska. One is to be found about seventy-five miles from Fort Wedderburn, at the south end

and unless Nets and Lines are sent immediately they will return to the Fort. The weather fine. February 1821

28th, *Wednesday*: Charming weather. St. Denis gone to Point de Roche with some hooks lines &c. Bouche arrived from the Fort Hunters with 200 lbs of Buffaloe meat, some dressed Leather & Shaganappy Lines:—the Indians are discontented and I have reason to believe that Lamallice's Family are endeavouring to poison their minds against us. It is necessary to shake off this nest of Vipers as if they are not in N.W. pay they are warmly attached to that cause. Bouche saw two of our men at the Catches and expects Grignon and his party in the course of a day or two. Received two loads of Fish from the Big Island where Dominique had arrived yesterday from Point de Roche on account of the scarcity of provisions.

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1st, *Thursday*: The weather very pleasant for the season of the year. Sent two trains to the Big Island for fish. We have only six men besides Officers & House Servants at present in the Fort, vizt.: 2 Sawyers, 2 cutting & 1 hauling firewood and 1 usually employed as a Carpenter. Simon McGillivray has joined Black & his associates at the watch house. March 1821

2nd, *Friday*: The Sun begins to have considerable power and it's reflection on the Snow is very injurious to the Eyes; the air continues keen, but on the whole the Weather is remarkably fine for the season of the year. The Ice is from 5 feet 10 inches to 6 feet thick at present. Received two trains fish from the Big Island. Grignon and party arrived from the Fort Hunters with about 1000 lbs of Buffaloe meat, a few skins, cords &c; they have been 16 Days absent altho' the Voyage might have been completed in 9, and have consumed and destroyed more provisions than they brought home.

of Lake Claire, and there is a Stone Point on Lake Athabaska itself, immediately east of Big Island and about sixty-five miles from the fort. That to which Simpson refers, here and on pp. 203, 271, 275, 321, 326-7, 329, 330, 331, 339, 343, is clearly near the mouth of the Athabaska River, and Simpson speaks of it indiscriminately as the Big Point, the Grand Point, and the Point de Roche. It was thirty-six miles from Fort Wedderburn (p. 271).

March Grignon is quite useless about the Fort and it is really vexa-
 1821 tious to be saddled with the expense and have the name of so
 many Clerks when we derive no benefit from their Services, I
 would gladly exchange half a dozen of our present Officers for
 two good English Halfbreeds. Grignon talks of breaking his
 Engagement, I shall however save him that trouble as he con-
 sumes more provisions & tobacco than his services are worth.

[fo. 104] 3rd, *Saturday*: Weather as yesterday. Sent two Trains to
 the Big Island for fish. Examined our Trader Mr. Chastellain
 & Glasgow the Cook very particularly relative to a petty theft
 of Tea & Flour; they pleaded Guilty which gives me a firm
 hold of both; if the services of the former are required for
 another year, he must either remain on my terms or submit to a
 heavy fine; the latter will be a most useful Man to Mr. Brown
 in the Mountain, as he speaks English, French & Iroquois
 fluently, he did intend going to Canada this season having a
 considerable Balance in the Compys. hands but he must now
 prepare for another campaign.¹ Directed Chastellain to prepare
 Nets for New Caladonia which he would have evaded if pos-
 sible. Two Indian lads arrived from the Fort Hunters bring-
 ing information that they have killed Four Buffaloe.

4th, *Sunday*: The weather continues fine. Sent four trains
 to the Big Island for Fish and received two loads from thence.
 Two men arrived from Point de Roche for a supply of hooks
 and lines, as the Wolves had destroyed those formerly sent.
 Received two trains Buffaloe meat wt. about 400 lbs from the
 Fort Hunters. Sent orders to the people at Point de Rochè to
 return to the Fort as some of them are required here and others
 must go to Beren's House for the purpose of raising Canoe
 Bark. Had an interview with Grignon, this man is engaged as
 a Clerk at 2000 livres p annum & 200 livres for dogs, the latter
 sum is extravagant Wages for such an useless animal; he is
 desirous of having his engagement cancelled and without con-
 sulting me told his Friends about the Fort that he intended
 breaking it: I did not stand on much ceremony with this
 Gentleman, but gave him my sentiments in very plain terms
 which brought him to his senses and instead of joining the

¹ Glasgow eventually went to Montreal in 1821.

N.W. as he threatened, he promises to alter his conduct for March the better; I shall give him a passage to the Depot in Spring, 1821 and consign him to the Govr. in Chief who seems to understand how such people should be disciplined; here I cannot attempt coercive measures as Fort Chipewyan is contiguous to us. Two men started for Harrisons House by whom I sent the following Letter, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *4th March*, 1821.

MR. GEO. PETER ANDRIES, }
Harrison's House. }

DEAR SIR,

I was much concerned to learn by Mr McDougald's report that you have undergone many privations of late, and would before now have sent to your relief, had it been in my power, but we have been nearly reduced to the same condition from the same cause; at this moment several of our people are at Point de Roche and the few men and dogs about the Fort are barely sufficient to furnish us with the necessaries of life. The measure you have adopted in sending Mr. McDougald and the three men to this place was very judicious under the existing circumstances, and the zeal and interest you have manifested in not abandoning the Post notwithstanding the serious difficulties under which you labored is highly commendable. If you find that there is no possibility of maintaining the establishment it must be abandoned, there is no alternative, and the plan you have determined on of accompanying the Indians in their Spring hunts to this place is the best that can be devised; but if subsistence is to be collected by any exertion, I entreat that you will remain until the latter end of April unless our Opponents abandon it previously, in the latter case you must use your own discretion, but I would recommend it's being maintained whatever steps they may adopt, as altho' no returns can be expected it will convince the natives that we are not exactly Birds of Passage. Herewith I send one train and two men with the articles specified in the annexed List, and I assure you altho' the quantity is small, it is more than we can

March well afford. My intention is to send Mr. McDougald from
 1821 hence in May with a little ammunition and tobacco, to keep up
 the Post during the Summer, in order to secure provisions, also
 a Fisherman with Detour or Chaurit which I think will be
 sufficient. There is no doubt but it may still be a valuable
 Post as Isle ala Crosse cannot maintain all the Indians that are
 now attached to that District, and from the arrangements made
 there is no doubt but we shall be abundantly supplied with men
 and goods next season. The McKenzie's River expedition
 will be handsomely fitted out and under your zealous manage-
 ment I am satisfied it must do well. You will be glad to learn
 that the Honble. Committee have determined on giving fresh
 vigour to their operations throughout the country and it is
 quite impossible that our Opponents can stand more than an-
 other year:—The campaign of 1821/22 will be a memorable
 æra in the N.W. Chronicles. Pray do not detain the people as
 their services are much required at this place, let the train be
 loaded and say how many you will require in Spring. With
 best wishes, I remain, Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

5th, Monday : Received five trains fish from the Big Island
 where there are 33 Nets constantly in use producing from
 80 to 90 fish p diem:—had our Fort Hunters not been success-
 ful lately we must have been reduced to starvation. The con-
 sumption of provisions at this place is incredible, the Officer's
 Mess including three House Servants expends about 90 lbs
 Buffaloe Meat p Diem, this may seem a paradox, as we have
 seldom more than nine sitters at Table, but when it is known
 that some of these men eat from 8 to 10 lbs p day it is explained,
 and some of these Gluttons have the assurance to complain
 that they are half starved. The sun has been so powerful this
 Forenoon as to thaw the snow on the houses and the Flies are
 beginning to awake from their Torpor.

6th, Tuesday : Sent Mr. O'Doherty with four men and five
 trains to the Fort Hunters for Meat; two N.W. men are gone
 to watch their motions. Sent two trains to the Big Island for
 Fish & received one load from thence. The lectures I gave to

Grignon & Chastellain on the 3rd & 4th Inst. seem to work March
 like magic on our half Gentry; Lamallice who has not done 1821
 one iota about the Fort since the month of October has been
 pleased to intimate, that he will now make Snow Shoes, assist
 in building Canoes &c. &c. and Bouche who has hitherto been
 full of impertinence begins to muster all his civility. Mr.
 Robertson through some mistaken notion conceived that it was
 impracticable to secure a footing in Athabasca without the
 assistance of renegado N.W. Halfbreeds, and by his marked
 attentions made them feel that we were quite dependent on
 their services; if kept at a proper distance they would be very
 useful men, but instead of that he seemed to put them on an
 equality with himself, and drew a line of distinction between
 them, and the principal Officers of the Department, who were [fo. 105]
 treated and looked upon as inferiors in every point of view, the
 consequence is that these Mongrels assume the great men,
 treat their superiors with every mark of disrespect (which they
 can do with impunity in the heat of opposition) and the in-
 terested and valuable Officers are become quite disgusted with
 the service. I found it necessary to alter this system otherways
 every Gentleman in the Department whose contract had ex-
 pired would this season have retired and the bringing those
 malcontents into a tolerable state of subordination has been
 attended with much trouble; if I can get two or three attached
 English Halfbreeds into the country next season I shall en-
 treat Govr. Williams to discharge a few of those troublesome
 fellows now about us. The N.W. I imagine have abandoned
 their Post at Harrisons House as the Officers who went there
 in the Fall are now with Black at the Guard House.

7th, Wednesday: The weather finer than it is usually in
 England at this season of the year and for several hours to day
 the Fires were extinguished. Sent one train to the Big Island
 for fish and received two loads from thence; Cochrane wrote
 me a few lines intimating that Rondeau the N.W. Fisherman
 called on him last night at the Big Island for the purpose of
 apprising me that Black was determined on Capturing Mr.
 Brown, Grignon, Bouche & myself by entering our Fort in the
 night time: for once I think that Gentleman is out in his

March calculations as we are now tolerably well prepared for his
1821 reception.

8th, Thursday: The weather as yesterday. Sent two trains for Fish to the Big Island and received one load. Mr. Brown has resumed his labors at the 'Private journal' notwithstanding my remarks on the 17th Jany., and to day I have had another communication with him on the subject which I think will arrest his progress: I have informed him that it is my intention to demand it Officially in Spring for the purpose of laying before the Govr. in Chief. Cochrane and St. Denis arrived from the Big Island; the people at Point de Roche were ordered from thence a few days ago, but now object to return as they are getting abundance of fine trout. Reinforcements of Troops assembling daily at the N.W. Guard House, independent of the Establishment at Fort Chipewyan, there are now at the Watch House Two Partners, six Clerks, Three Bullies and four Murderers besides Halfbreeds and Canadians, in all about double the number of people they ever had at Athabasca Lake, and a proportionate quantity of goods, whereas our forces do not amount to one half; indeed the post was never in such an embarrassed state as at this moment, the number of people considerably short of last year and not one third of the Goods; if I had the means I would watch the N.W. Indians closely and in all probability get part of their hunts, but there is such a dearth of men and goods that I cannot attempt to oppose them with such vigour as could be desirable.

9th, Friday: The weather continues fine. Cochrane arrived from the Big Island with a supply of fish.

10th, Saturday: Cloudy weather and appearance of Snow. Received two trains of fish from the Big Island; Isbister arrived from thence for the purpose of renewing his Engagement who informs me that the Fisheries are improving having taken about 120 to day and yesterday. Mr. McDougald arrived from the Big Bubbies band with about one and a half packs of Furs, some dressed Leather and provisions; he saw Pouce Coupee (one of our Chiefs) who has about a pack of Furs but would not deliver them until he received a supply of Goods

from the Fort, which are made up and Bouche starts with them March
early tomorrow. 1821

11th, Sunday: Wind N. blowing hard & cold. Bouche and Blondin started at three O'Clock this morning for Pouce Coupee's Furs, and I think got away undiscovered by the N.W. Wrote the following Letter: vizt.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 11th March, 1821.

MR. JOSEPH GREILL, }
Berens House. }

SIR,

With reference to Messrs. Brown & Miles's Letters of 9th Ult. to which I request your particular attention; I now send four men and two Sleds to be employed as follows: vizt. St. Denis the Guide, Rocheleau and the N.W. Deserter are to proceed the second day after their arrival at Beren's House accompanied by a Hunter in search of Canoe Bark, one of the Sleds sent will attend them and you must find as many dogs in addition as are necessary to convey the Bark of Four Canoes to this place; as the season is now far advanced I think you will be able to trade a few from the Crees on moderate terms, if not it will be necessary to exchange a stronger dog for one of those now sent. In the event of the N.W. man being captured, you will send one belonging to the Post with St. Denis and Rocheleau. Gaudorie will only require one day to repose himself & dogs and immediately afterwards return with the Goods left by the Isle ala Crosse people; our Indians are now making their appearance and we are much in want of those articles; if Mr. Oxley arrives previous to Gaudorie's departure, they will come on together, but if not let one of your people accompany him half way and then return to Berens House. Pray inform me if you have engaged any of the people and on what terms; you will also have the goodness to let me know if the Canoe sent to Berens House in the Fall is fit to convey the Pemican from Portage La Loche in Spring, if not, it will be necessary to send one from hence; the people will be at your place early in May.

The Indians I understand are desirous to have our

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March establishment removed further up the River, let me know the
 1821 exact place; it may be necessary to erect a store there previous
 to Clouston's arrival; but I shall write you on this subject fully
 hereafter. Our stock of Rum is very limited, you must there-
 fore deal it out sparingly, I expect you will receive some for
 the summer Trade. Let the utmost exertion be used to lay up
 a considerable stock of provisions, for the Canoes going out in
 [fo. 106] Spring, as the Supplies from Isle à la Crosse are very uncertain.
 Have the goodness to impress on the minds of the Indians a
 favorable opinion of Clouston and let them know that we shall
 be abundantly supplied with Rum & Goods next season, when
 we expect the whole of them to join us and shake off the
 N.W. Yoke. Pray forward by Gaudorie Babiche for foot and
 toe netting as we are much in need of that article also a few
 dressed skins for Shoes. I am glad to find that you are in
 readiness to accompany Mr. Brown across the Mountain in
 June, our prospects in that quarter are most flattering; with
 regard to Salary I have no doubt it will be arranged to your
 entire satisfaction. I trust you will render every facility to
 Mr. Oxley and the people now sent, and that you will supply
 them with any necessaries they may absolutely require, in order
 that no time may be unnecessarily lost. Write me fully stating
 the quantity of provisions and Furs you have secured with every
 other interesting particular relative to the Post. I remain, Sir,

Your mo. Obed. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

12th, Monday : St. Denis, Rocheleau and the N.W. Deserter
 started at three O'Clock this morning to the neighbourhood of
 Berens House in quest of Canoe Bark, and Gaudorie for Goods
 left by the Isle à la Crosse people at Berens House. Clouston
 with three men gone to the Big Island and Point de Roche for
 the purpose of making arrangements with the fishermen. An
 Indian who accompanied 'Black flesh' in his Winter hunt
 arrived this afternoon; two N.W. Indians are at the same en-
 campment; on his way hither he fell in with two N.W. men
 who returned with him; they did intend taking him by force
 to the Guard House, but the Indian aware of their purpose

deserted from them when near our Gate and escaped: Black- March
 flesh and this Indian have about 70 skins together, the N.W. 1821
 Indians about 30; three N.W. Trains were sent off from Fort
 Chipewyan seemingly for the purpose of intercepting our men
 on the Track and the people at the Guard House are keeping a
 sharp look out, that we do not send off in the night time. A
 circumstance took place this evening which may be productive
 of a serious quarrel with our Opponents, it appears that Knipe,
 (late a Soldier in the Meuron Regt.) the man who usually locks
 up the Gates, had some misunderstanding with the N.W.
 people on watch in the course of the day; when locking the
 Front Gate about 6 O'Clock p.m. he and St. Picquè renewed
 their altercation, the latter said he would choak Knipe first
 time they met, Knipe in consequence challenged him to Fight
 with Guns and forthwith went to his Bed place, took his piece
 to the top of the Hill, and fired it off; the men in the Bastion
 called out that he had fired upon them; the Report alarmed
 our Officers in the Hall who immediately took the Gun out of
 his hands and I reprimanded him severely on the impropriety
 of his conduct. I have no doubt that Black and his associates
 may lay hold of this trifling circumstance as a pretext for some
 future outrage altho' it does not appear that he either levelled
 the piece at them, or that it was loaded, the distance between
 him and the Bastion was upwards of 100 yds. Gave directions
 that a Guard be regularly kept during the Night in future. Mr.
 McDougald & Delonee preparing to accompany the Indian
 early To-morrow.

13th, Tuesday: Severe frost the weather clear and very cold.
 McDougald and Delonee started with the Indian for Black-
 flesh's before day break this morning. Two Carpenters arrang-
 ing Seats in the Top of the Lower Bastion which is in future to
 be used as a look out for Indians. O'Hara a N.W. disaffected
 Clerk conveyed a Note to me through the post hole of the Bas-
 tion, he promises to inform me privately of the N.W. motions;
 it is necessary to keep this fellow in good humour as he may
 be a useful spy in the Enemy's camp, I have therefore given
 him the following note to Mr. Garden which I mean hereafter
 to countermand, vizt.:

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March
1821

FORT WEDDERBURN, ATHABASCA LAKE,
13th March, 1821.

GEO. GARDEN, ESQRE., }
Montreal. }

SIR,

The Bearer Mr. Thomas O'Hara you will please engage in the capacity of a Clerk to the Honble. Hudson's Bay Co. to come into the Interior spring 1822, also Julien Tavurnur dit St. Picquè in the capacity of Boute: the terms and further particulars I shall hand you from Norway House.—I remain, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Received two trains fish from the Big Island.

14th, Wednesday: Intense frost and very cold. Sent two trains to the Big Island for fish. Clouston arrived from Point de Roche with two loads; three of the men who were there in quest of their own subsistence will be here Tomorrow. About three O'Clock Lamallice brought information that 4 Indians and Canadians had appeared on the Lake at a considerable distance, as they approached three of the party took the direction of Fort Chipewyan and the fourth came towards our Fort; a N.W. Bully started from the Guard House to meet him, and was joined by Lamallice as he passed in front of our Gate, both parties conceived it was an Indian, and I directed the Gentlemen to arm themselves in order to protect him if necessary, our Opponents also mustered their forces and there was a general turn out on the Lake, in full armour, the N.W. outnumbering us in the proportion of 13 to 6; the stranger proved to be Piche one of our men who had passed the winter with 'Rabbit's Eyes'¹ an Indian; he has made a tolerable hunt about 50 skins in Beaver and Martins, and is now encamped with about 20 N.W. Indians 7 days march from hence who have made pretty good hunts and have put en C  che a few skins for us. Clouston is to proceed to the Indian Tents early

¹ This Indian is not included in the list of Indians equipped in the Athabaska District, 1820-21.

To-morrow with a small Equipment attended by three men March
and two trains. Piche does not know the way back to the 1821
Indians as they are marching through woods towards the
Buffaloe Hunting grounds and if the N.W. cut a fresh track
and get off without our Knowledge I suspect Clouston will [fo. 107]
make an unprofitable trip of it; if the N.W. get to the Tents
before him, there is little doubt but they will plunder the In-
dian; Piche the Canadian has taken possession of the skins so
far as to pack them up with some clothes on his train & left
the whole in charge of Rabbit's Eyes.

15th, Thursday: Weather as yesterday. Three trains
started from Fort Chipewyan early this morning in the direc-
tion of the Indian Tracks of Yesterday and Clouston with two
Trains joined them on the Route. Both here and at the Guard
house there is a strict Watch Kept, but the N.W. have a great
advantage over us as they are enabled to send off at all Hours
from Fort Chipewyan without our Knowledge, whereas we can-
not from our insular situation move out of the Fort without
being discovered: My intention was to have placed a Guard
House close to the Stockades of Fort Chipewyan this season,
but we have not a sufficient number of people to maintain both
establishments. O'Hara of the N.W. sent me a note inti-
mating that a band of their Indians are encamped at the
Rivierre Pinnette¹ about two days march from hence; we
immediately prepared to send an Officer and some goods to
them when two persons appeared on the Lake at a considerable
distance coming towards the Fort; all hands were instantly
under arms to sally forth if necessary, but they were permitted
to come into the Fort unmolested and turned out to be Philip
and an Indian from the Band of 'Lezett' who have about five
packs of prime Furs chiefly Beaver: the band consists of 7
Indians, their demands are moderate; we have made up a small
assortment of Goods with which Grignon and two men start
early tomorrow and unable [sic] to send after the N.W.
Indians. I am surrounded with difficulties having neither
Officers, Men, Goods or Dogs fit for the Trade, the only 4
dogs now in the Fort are either blind or lame, and it is a matter

¹ The Pine River, Peace River District. Cf. Fort Pinette, Appendix A.

March of doubt whether they can reach the Tents: we cannot at-
 1821 tempt looking after the N.W. Indians while our Opponents
 have the means of tampering with and pillaging ours at discretion, the consequence is that we shall to a moral certainty loose both Indians and Furs and if Athabasca is not better provided next season, we must unavoidably loose our footing in it all together: there never was perhaps a concern so completely ruined through neglect, the arrangement of Officers, men and Goods are not sufficiently attended to either at the Compys. establishments in the Lower Country or in Canada, and those who were in charge of the business inland have never studied it's Interests so that it is a matter of surprise that we have not been under the necessity of abandoning it altogether, and I am of opinion that another such year as the last will prove fatal to the Compys. prospects in it:—for my own part I would not on any consideration undergo a repetition of the vexations, misery and anxiety I have this year suffered, arising solely from the want of means to carry on the Business as it ought to be conducted, indeed every Gentleman and Servant in the concern who have an interest in it's welfare view the state of affairs with sentiments of heartfelt despondency.

16th, Friday : Fine clear weather but very cold. Grignon and two men accompanied by the Indian and Two Trains set off at day break for Lezett's encampment attended by a N.W. Officer, 3 men & Trains. Two Indian lads arrived from 'Thell'¹ and another, who are encamped near the Bark Mountain; they have made a poor hunt in consequence of the death of a Relation and in the agony of grief according to ancient usage 'rent their Garments' so that they are now destitute of every necessary. Mr. O'Doherty, five men & trains arrived from the Fort Hunters with about 1100 lbs of Buffaloe Meat. Bouche & Blondin returned from 'Pouce Coupee' with nearly a pack of Furs; private Trade is still carried on, Lamallice's having received a bag of pounded meat, some Beaver tails and a Moose Skin, his services are most important to us at present and to avoid the risk of irritating this Fiend I

¹ An Indian trading with the H.B.C. He appears in the list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn in 1820-21.

am under the necessity of winking at the transaction but it shall rise in judgement against him at the Depot. A small Outfit is prepared for Thell and his companion with which Duford is to start early in the morning. Bouche and three men with trains are to proceed after Grignon to Lezetts Band, as the N.W. are gone thither in considerable force. March 1821

17th, Saturday: At three O'Clock a.m. Bouche with three men and two Trains took their departure for Lezetts Band, they are the pick of the Fort, and altho' the N.W. started yesterday morning they expect to get to the Indian Tents with them. Duford, Felix & the Indian lads set out at the same time for 'Thell's' encampment. McDougald returned from 'Black Flesh's' Tent with nearly a pack of Furs, the Old man swears revenge on the N.W. for the murder of his son at Bas de la Rivierre by Simon McGillivray. Mr. Oxley arrived from Lac La Loche attended by Mr. Manson of that Post and two men, they have brought a Keg containing when delivered at Lac La Loche 7 Galls 1 Pt Spirits, a small Bale of dried goods and a Keg of Powder; articles which should have been forwarded by the fall Canoe from Isle ala Crosse: the carriage of these pieces taking provisions, Wages &c., &c., into consideration may be estimated at not less than £50 each. The non-arrival of that canoe and property has been productive of incalculable injury to this Department, and I am at a loss whether to attribute it to Mr. Clarke's inexcusable neglect or to a desire of harassing us by every means in his power; any man of common sense, or who had the least interest in the welfare of the concern, would have forwarded these Goods to Lac La Loche in the Fall, as from the lateness of the season there was a risk that the Canoe could not get back if it proceeded to Isle ala Crosse; Mr. Clarke had two opportunities of forwarding them without subjecting himself to the least inconvenience, each time a canoe being sent not more than half Laden from Isle ala Crosse to Lac La Loche. I am grieved to learn that discord prevails throughout that District; Mr. Clarke by his arbitrary and selfish measures has made himself obnoxious to nearly all the Officers under his jurisdiction which [fo. 108] must be very injurious to the service, it appears that he &

March Archd. McDonald his Secy. have determined on ruining Mr.
 1821 McLeod of Lac La Loche in the estimation of the Committee
 & Govr. in Chief, because he does not choose to curry favor
 and worship his superior whose measures he cannot conscientiously
 approve, and they have coiled up a string of charges which are to be
 preferred against him in Spring. McLeod is in my opinion as trusty &
 confidential an Officer as any in the Service, and this party work
 against him solely arises from the circumstance of his being an
 expectant to the charge of the District in the event of Mr. Clarke's
 being removed therefrom to which Mr. McDonald is also a candidate
 under the patronage of Mr. Clarke. By Mr. McLeod's Letter I am
 deeply concerned to learn that there is a scarcity of provisions both
 at Carlton and Edmonton which will be most injurious to our
 prospects, as it is doubtful whether maintenance can be provided
 for the Brigades to and from the interior; it is therefore necessary
 that every exertion should be made here to collect provisions,
 but our supplies are so limited that I am apprehensive the
 Indians will not be prevailed on to follow the Buffaloe during
 the Summer. Mr. Greill writes me from Beren's House that the
 Crees belonging to that establishment will assuredly desert us
 unless a supply of dry Goods & Rum is forwarded immediately,
 I have it therefore in contemplation to despatch Men to Isle
 ala Crosse for some articles we stand in immediate need of.

18th, Sunday: Charming weather; nothing worthy of remark to day.

19th, Monday: Weather as yesterday. Sent two trains to the
 Fort Hunters for Buffaloe Meat and four trains to the Big Island
 for fish.

20th, Tuesday: The weather intensely cold. Received two
 trains fish from the Big Island. Late in the evening two light
 N.W. Trains arrived at the Guard House from Lezetts Band so
 that I am in hopes they have been unsuccessful in that quarter.

21st, Wednesday: Fine mild weather. Wrote the following
 Letters: vizt.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 21st March, 1821.

March
1821JOHN CLARKE, ESQRE., }
Isle ala Crosse. }

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of addressing you on the 9th Ult by Mr. Oxley to which I beg reference and your particular attention; that Gentleman proceeded no further than Lac La Loche and arrived here on the 17th Inst. accompanied by Mr. Manson bringing with them the remainder of the Goods expected by the fall Canoe, except one Keg of Rum, a pair of Blankets and a few Belts and files which I conceive Mr. McLeod has applied to the use of his own post. Mr. McLeods Letter confirms your report of the scarcity of Pemican both at Carlton and Edmonton; this unfortunate circumstance assumes a most alarming appearance, and threatens the Compys. Interests in the North with ruinous consequences, every possible exertion should therefore be called forth to avert this impending danger and if you will render the necessary co-operation I think it may be escaped in a considerable degree. My intention therefore is to exhort the Indians belonging to this Post and Beren's House to devote the whole of their attention during the summer to Buffaloe Hunting, for the maintenance of our Brigades to their Wintering Grounds during the Summer and in the fall. The Crees at Beren's House have declared that they will not hunt unless they are supplied with Rum, which is the main spring of the Provision trade¹; our Stock both here and at that place is reduced to seven Gallons which is insufficient to collect our Winter Credits: I have therefore to entreat

¹ Later, when the Company was attempting to cut down the amount of spirits supplied to the Indians (1822), Simpson insisted on this point, that spirits would remain necessary in the plain countries as long as they depended on the Indians for food (D. 4/85/fo. 16^d). He convinced the Committee, who replied to the urgings of the Colonial Office in 1825 that although they had ordered that spirits should no longer be bartered for furs yet 'Whilst it was necessary to procure animal provisions from the Indians of the Plains . . . it would be necessary to employ more caution in altering the System of trading with them and that for a few years it might be necessary to barter Spirits for Provisions to a limited extent' [A. 8/1/fo. 252].

March that you will furnish me with two Kegs in addition to that which
 1821 Mr. McLeod has retained, say in all three full sized Kegs of pure Spirits; those we have already received, contained on an average seven Gallons and evidently adulterated, one as black as Ink apparently mixed with Gun Powder or some other deleterious ingredient in order to give it pungency. The abundant supply you had in the Fall of that article cannot fail of enabling you to furnish this quantity without exposing the Trade of Isle ala Crosse to any serious inconvenience, but if it even has that effect it is a very secondary consideration to the evils I am endeavouring to obviate, and in making this demand I take all the consequences on my own shoulders: if you take the trouble of referring to the Govr. in Chief's communications I think you will find that he directs that my wants shall be supplied by Isle ala Crosse if practicable. In addition to the Spirits I request you will send me half a Keg of Powder also the eleven Pounds furnished by Mr. Finlayson to Mr. Spence in the Fall; together with a piece of coarse cloth. If the two trains herewith sent are insufficient to convey these Goods, have the goodness to send one of your men and a good train or two of Dogs along with them. Our few Indians have been tolerably industrious and I am glad to learn that Mr. McLeod makes a pretty good Trade at Lac La Loche. I have Letters from St. Marys to the 16th Jany.; Mr. Finlayson is likely to bring the affairs of Peace River into a more regular train than they have hitherto been; that Gentleman seems to conduct his business with much judgement. Fort de Pinnette will I understand produce from Eight to ten packs. Mr. Giasson & party returned safe from the Mountain, they made six packs and were most favorably received by the Natives. Pray favor me with a full and explicit reply to my last Letter and with best wishes I remain, Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. hble. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

P.S.—Favor me with 2 lb Vermillion p Bearer.¹

¹ Cf. p. 169, n. 11.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 21st March, 1821.

March

1821

[fo. 109]

JOHN McLEOD, Esq., }
 Lac La Loche. }

DEAR SIR,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed favour of 3rd Inst. which came to hand on the 17th and feel obliged by your exertions to return Mr. Oxley with the Goods without loss of time, but sadly disappointed that he did not bring the other Keg of Spirits which compels me to forward this Express. Your accounts from the plains are truly distressing and vexatious, they threaten our prospects in the North with the most alarming consequences and to avert the evil if possible I mean to employ our Indians both here and at Beren's House during the summer in making provisions for our Brigades passing to their destinations in the Fall. For this purpose Rum is indispensable and I have sent herewith a requisition to Mr. Clarke for two Kegs in addition to the one expected from your Post, in all three Kegs of Rum, a piece of Cloth and about 55 lbs of Powder. Have the goodness to render the men every facility in proceeding to Isle ala Crosse without delay and on their way back as I expect them here not later than the 25th Proxo. If Dogs are wanting pray supply them if possible. The two men belonging to this place who were out with your Indians must return by the Pemican Canoe if they do not accompany the Bearer. I do not expect a despatch from the Govr. in Chief, but if such makes it's appearance pray forward it without delay as it must be on important business. As Mr. Manson is not particularly required at your Post, I will detain him until Spring as we may have occasion for his services here. I am glad to learn that your prospects are favorable, here I think we shall divide the Trade which is inconsiderable as the greater proportion of our Indians are at your Post. I remain,
 Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

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March

FORT WEDDERBURN, 21st March, 1821.

1821

MR. JOSEPH GREILL, }
 Beren's House. }

SIR,

I am favored with your Letter of 12th Inst. by Mr. Oxley and beg to express my approbation of your conduct throughout the Winter; your exertions seem to have been great and you have done fully as well as I had reason to expect considering the annoyance from Passengers and difficulties you have labored under. It appears that we are likely to experience considerable inconvenience from a scarcity of provisions in the plains, it is therefore absolutely necessary that the utmost care is taken of your small stock for the maintenance of the Brigade going out in Spring and every inducement must be held out to the Crees at your Post to make provisions during the Summer. The supply of Goods you require is herewith sent and I have by this conveyance applied to Mr. Clarke for an additional Keg of Spirits for the use of Beren's House. Pray hold out every inducement both to your own Indians and those who are inclined to join us from the N.W. to hunt the Buffaloe without intermission, on their exertions entirely depends our Canoes being enabled to reach their destinations in the fall. Clouston will be with you about the latter end of next month, when you will be good enough to put him in charge, and introduce him to the Indians; it will then be necessary for you to proceed with a large Canoe to Lac La Loche for Pemican, and any supplies that can be spared by Mr. McLeod. The N.W. Blacksmith will be a useful man to us at this place, if therefore he is inclined to join us I shall protect and give him advantageous terms. Have the goodness to make a Bag of Pemican 90 lbs wt. for the use of my Canoe going out and if you can spare a few Tongues it will be obliging. I cannot give Laserte the terms he requires but will see him on my way out, and 'tis probable we may then come to an understanding. Mr. McLeod of Lac La Loche writes me that there was a Despatch from the Govr. in Chief expected daily at his place, and that he would send it to you forthwith, do me the favor to

forward it immediately on receipt. With reference to my March Letter by St. Denis of 11th Inst. to which I request your 1821 attention, I remain, Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

22nd, Thursday: Mild weather. Gaudorie & Obechon started early this morning for Isle alá Crosse, it is very important that they arrive here with the supplies before the Navigation opens and I have stimulated their exertions by a promise of 100 livres each if they return within that period. Two Trains gone to the Big Island for fish. Blackflesh and another Indian arrived with their families on a visit, they are very unwelcome guests as our Stores are poorly furnished both with goods & provisions. Mr. Grignon, Bouche & party arrived from 'Lezetts' Band with the finest Derouine ever made by the Company's Servts. in Athabasca about five packs Furs nearly all Beaver. One of the N.W. Interpreters had been at the Tents two days before our people got there; a N.W. Clerk also had the start of us and altho' his trains were loaded with fine goods, *Wine & Shrub* the Indians would not part with a skin until Grignon arrived to whom they gave all they had notwithstanding he had little more to give them than fair Words: on the whole I am much pleased with our few Indians, they have not only been very industrious but are staunch and true to our cause. Lamallice's still carries on his private Trade and must abide by the consequences when he is more within my power.

23rd, Friday: Mild weather. Received two trains fish from the Big Island and it is satisfactory to learn that the Fisheries improve as the hunting season is now over.

24th, Saturday: The weather continues fine. Sent five trains to the Big Island for Fish. Two men arrived from Harrisons House, by whom I have received a Letter from Mr. Andries dated 19th Inst. conveying the pleasing intelligence [fo. 110] that contrary to all hope he has got a very considerable supply of provisions and a few Furs, sufficient in all to load six trains which he requests may be sent down immediately and with

March which he means to come here. It appears that Mr. McLeod at
 1821 Lac La Loche could not fulfil the promises made by Mr. Clarkes recruiting Serjt.¹ to the Harrisons House Indians who are returned very much dissatisfied and in consequence of being debauched their Winter hunts have been entirely neglected.

25th, Sunday : Charming weather. Our Fort Hunters and their families arrived this afternoon, having killed nothing for a length of time ; they do not mean to resume their hunts until the navigation opens as the animals have removed to a considerable distance. The 'Bustard' ² one of our Fur hunters came in with his Wife, who is in the last stage of a consumption.

26th, Monday : The weather clear and very cold. Sent three men to the Rivierre Embarras to collect Pitch. Two men gone to the Big Island for fish, and received three loads from thence. Clouston and party arrived from 'Rabbits Eyes' with about $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of a Pack Furs: Boileau a N.W. Halfbreed got to the Tents a few hours before our people and between threats and persuasion got 9 Skins from the Indian, Clouston however Traded 4 skins from a N.W. Chief. Duford and Felix arrived from 'Thell' with about half a pack Furs, some dressed Leather, and provisions. Wrote the following Letter, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *26th March*, 1821.

MR. GEO. PETER ANDRIES, }
 Harrisons House. }

DEAR SIR,

I am favored with your esteemed Letter of the 19th Inst. and glad to find that the affairs of Harrisons House are not in such a desperate state as I had reason to anticipate. The supply of provisions which has so fortunately and unexpectedly fallen into your hands will be of the greatest importance to us, and the utmost care must be taken thereof as our prospects are by no means favorable from other quarters.

¹ An Indian named 'Serjeant John'. Cf. *supra*, p. 270.

² Probably a Chipewyan. He is not included in the list of Indians equipped at Fort Wedderburn in 1820-21.

Herewith I send six Trains and four men, Chaurit is confidential and trust worthy, you will therefore leave the Post under his charge and Lafontaine will remain in the capacity of Fisherman; these two men will be sufficient until Mr. McDougalds arrival by open water. If it is considered that no benefit will arise from your remaining longer, I think yourself, Family, and people (the two men above mentioned excepted) should come hither immediately, and as your Family cannot travel with so much expedition as the party now sent, I would recommend your leaving them to follow with two Trains, but it will be necessary that you accompany the other six to prevent the people from wasting Provisions unnecessarily.

Herewith I send a small quantity of Powder, Ball & Tobacco and you will have the goodness to impress on the Indians the necessity of being industrious during the Summer and that they will be handsomely rewarded on the arrival of the Canoes in the Fall. I remain

Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

27th, Tuesday: Wind Southerly with a fine gentle thaw. Sent four men and six trains to Harrisons House for Provisions and Furs; Mr. Andries and his family are to accompany them back. Settled accounts with the Indians now at the Fort, who have nearly paid their Credits; made them a few presents with which they do not appear satisfied, and so short of goods are we that the Gentlemen are under the necessity of giving their own clothes to prevent their joining the N.W.; the Indians tell me that the N.W. call us 'pitiful' (signifying poor & miserable) and that they now discover we are so by the state of our Stores, but that they will not desert us until they see whether my promises are fulfilled in the Fall; if not they can place no further confidence in us. Received two loads fish from the Big Island.

28th, Wednesday: A considerable quantity of Snow fell in the course of the Morning and the air very mild. Two Trains

March gone to the Big Island for fish. An Officer 3 men & 5 Trains
 1821 started early this morning from the Guard House in the direction of Lac Clair, sent Bouche & Adams to watch their motions in case they may be gone to any of our Indians. 'Lazette' the Chief arrived with his band, received them with a salute of Fire arms and hoisted flags: they are all 'Brandy hungry' but we have not spirits to give them a complete bouse which creates much dissatisfaction. Two Trains arrived with a small quantity of tainted Buffaloe Meat, the Wolves had opened the Caêches and nearly destroyed two carcasses.

29th, *Thursday*: Charming weather. Mr. Brown had an interview with 'O'Hara' of the N.W. early this morning; it appears that Black & McGillivray have discovered that we are prepared to receive them in the case of an attack and have therefore abandoned the project; they in their turn are now alarmed and much on their guard, so that I am apprehensive it would be a very dangerous enterprize to attempt arresting Black at present. O'Hara further states that instructions have been issued to Murder Knipe the Meuron, and to Capture Grignon the Contstable; he recommends that I should not expose myself to the view of the N.W. Bastion as he thinks it probable that some of their assassins may consider it a meritorious act to pop me off, he overheard Simon McGillivray say something to that effect a few Days ago, having remarked that it could be easily done and no person would know who did it. 'Lezett' and his band making loud complaints about the short allowance of Spirits given them; they visited the N.W. who are using every means to decoy them being aware of our poverty and this afternoon received a present of Rum and Shrub. Our Stock of provisions very limited, both fisheries produce about 80 to 100 p day; the allowance of the people reduced. All the Officers on Guard to night to prevent the N.W. from withdrawing the Indians.

30th, *Friday*: The weather continues mild. At One O'Clock A.M. Adams & Piche arrived, the former from Bouche the Interpreter and the latter from 'Kayenne' & 'Rabbit's Eyes' Tents who was coming to the Fort with an Indian Lad
 [fo. 111] when they met Bouche with the N.W. people; Bouche im-

mediately proceeded to the Tents where there are about 110 March
 Skins Made Beaver¹ and some provisions, and is to remain there 1821
 until the arrival of Men & trains from hence which have been
 forwarded. Duford gone for a load of Buffaloe meat and Bi-
 beau to join 'Thell' & 'Ecuzzecha'.² Sent two trains to the
 Big Island for fish. Made a long harangue to Lezett & his
 band on receiving their presents which fell short of their expect-
 ations; great exertions have been used to please them and the
 Wardrobes of every Gentleman in the Fort have been put under
 contribution. Lezett has been presented with his medal which
 is highly estimated. The 'Bustards' Wife died this morning,
 or more properly speaking a termination was put to her suffer-
 ings as she was actually buried before the vital spark was
 extinguished; the relations demonstrated their grief by clamor-
 ous lamentations and the destruction of their clothes. An
 Indian lad returned from a hunting excursion and killed a
 Moose within a day's March of the Fort. Mr. Manson re-
 turned from the Fishery which I regret to say is falling off
 considerably.

31st, Saturday: Fine clear weather. Sent a train for the
 Moose Killed by the Indian lad yesterday. Received two
 loads of fish from the Big Island. 'Thell' & 'Ecuzzecha'
 arrived with their families, gave them a little Rum in the
 evening which set all the Indians in the humour of Drink-
 ing; the Indians applied repeatedly for more but without
 effect and at length went to the North West Guard House
 about 11 O'Clock P.M. where they were equally unsuc-
 cessfull; all the Gentlemen on watch to night to prevent
 our Opponents visiting the Tents. All the people about
 the Fort busily employed for some days past in cutting
 and squaring building Timbers, collecting gum, firewood
 &c &c.

¹ 'Made-beaver' and 'whole-beaver' were local technical terms employed to denote the fixed unit of the locality. A skin from an adult beaver, of prime quality and perfect condition, was the actual unit, or 'made beaver'.

² An Indian trading with the H.B.C. He is included in the list of Indians trading and equipped at Fort Wedderburn in 1820-21.

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1st, Sunday : Fine mild thaw and the Fort nearly cleared of Snow. Two Trains gone to the Big Island for fish. Recd. a train of fresh meat.

2nd, Monday : The weather continues mild. St. Denis the Guide and three men arrived from Beren's House; Mr. Greill writes me that having no goods to give his Indians he could not prevail on them to conduct our people to the part of the Country where Canoe bark is to be found, they have in consequence returned unsuccessfull, and it is now too late in the season to make an other attempt, we must therefore entirely depend on Peace River for Canoes. The Cree Fort Hunters had not arrived at Beren's House when Mr. Greill wrote and it is supposed they have delivered their Furs at Lesser Slave Lake as at the time they were equiped it was uncertain whether Mr. Greill could have established the Post: His Fort Hunters have discontinued following the Buffaloe as he cannot supply their wants and his stock of provisions is decreasing rapidly. 'Pouce Coupee' the Chief arrived and was received with the usual honors; he made grievous complaints that himself & young men could not get drunk and threatened to join the N.W., we have all been under the necessity of dismantling ourselves to please this Indian and his band, shirts, waistcoats &c have been given to pacify him as also the remaining Medal but all does not compensate the want of Spirits. Received two loads fish from the Big Island. Mr. McVicar attended by one man arrived in the short space of seven days from Gt. Slave Lake; the accounts he brings from thence I am grieved to say are by no means flattering, the 'Bute'¹ his principal Chief died of a bleeding at the Nose early in the winter soon after his arrival at a distant part of the Country which abounded with Beaver, and where there was every prospect of making great hunts; this unfortunate event discouraged his Band (a set of the finest hunters at the Lake) they tore their clothes, destroyed the Furs they had made, gave way to all the extravagancies of Grief; returned to the Fort in the most wretched

¹ Cf. p. 369.

state possible, and abandoned all idea of further exertion for this Season. Another principal Indian lost his Son, he and his followers also gave themselves up to despair and relinquished their hunts. In addition to these misfortunes the establishment was reduced to the greatest misery through Starvation in consequence of the failure of the Fall Fishery; Mr. McVicar was therefore under the necessity of recalling several of his Fur hunters to the neighbourhood of the Fort in order to provide sustenance, in which they succeeded; having laid up a considerable quantity of provisions, but the Trade has in consequence been ruined in a great measure and I fear the proceeds of the District will come far short of my expectations. The want of means in the early part of the Season has been the ground work of all our evils: the N.W. had an abundant stock of Goods and Men throughout the Summer, and in the Fall 5 Canoes manned by 30 stout active Winterers laded with 140 pieces Goods each 90 lbs Wt.;—on the contrary the H.B. Coy. had not a particle of goods during the summer, their fall Brigade consisted of three Canoes manned by 13 poor miserable half starved wretches containing about 45 pieces Goods, each on an average wt. about 60 lbs, with such a disparity of means it is not possible to hope or expect that any good can be done: it is by appearance alone that the Indians are enabled to judge of our respectability and under existing circumstances it is not to be wondered that we are both despised and neglected by them: a formidable well arranged Brigade would however give a new face to the affairs of Gt. Slave Lake, the Indians are anxious to join us and one season would put us on an equality with our Opponents.

I understand from Mr. McVicar that Mr. Back of the Expedition had intimated to the North West Voyageurs & Halfbreeds at Slave Lake, that the Government patronised and supported the N.W. Coy., and that the H.B. Coy. were looked upon as common adventurers in whom it felt no interest; there may be a great deal of truth in these remarks but they tend to injure us very much in the Eyes of the Indians, and give the N.W. half Savage adherents an idea that any outrage

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April or violence committed on us may pass with impunity; I am
 1821 however satisfied that His Majesty's Government have never
 [fo. 112] authorised the Gentn. of the Discovery Expedition to make
 such assertions. From Mr. Back's remarks to Mr. McVicar
 it would appear that Mr. Oxley has communicated to him every
 circumstance of a public and private nature that has occurred
 here in the course of the winter: if Mr. Oxley did so far lose
 sight of his duty and betray the confidence which was neces-
 sarily reposed in him through pique or otherways, it by no
 means justifies Mr. Back's impertinent interference in our
 affairs and I am satisfied that if the heads of the Colonial
 Department or the Lords of the Admiralty Know that any of
 their Officers took such an active part in the existing differences
 between the Hudson's Bay and North West Coys. their con-
 duct would meet with the censure it deserves.

3rd, Tuesday: Mild pleasant weather. Our Stock of pro-
 visions is so much reduced that we are unable to maintain
 our present establishment, have therefore sent Messrs.
 Oxley, Manson & Grignon and five men to Point de Roche
 for the purpose of finding their own subsistence with Nets,
 Hooks & Lines. Sent four trains to the Big Island for fish.
 The people employed in burning charcoal, collecting gum &
 Squaring Timber.

4th, Wednesday: The weather cold with snow. Received
 two loads fish from the Big Island where the people that were
 sent to Point de Roche yesterday remain contrary to orders
 consuming provisions altho' they know we are on the eve of
 starvation here.

5th, Thursday: Disagreeable cold weather. Three men and
 trains gone for Buffaloe meat and two trains to the Big Island
 for fish. Bouche returned from the Indian tents with about a
 pack of furs and some provisions. A N.W. Indian brought
 me information that four strange Indians had arrived at Fort
 Chipewyan this morning; it appears that they came from the
 neighbourhood of Harrisons House with the intention of
 joining us and on the Track met a N.W. man of whom they
 inquired the way to Fort Wedderburn, he immediately in-
 formed them that he was an Englishman and would conduct

them, and they without the least suspicion of the Trick were conveyed to Fort Chipewyan. In the evening I sent 'Lezett' our Chief over to inform the Indians that they were imposed upon, but the N.W. Interpreters would not allow him to have any communication with them; I suspect they are detained by force or kept ignorant of the cheat, and have equipped Mr. McDougald, Bouche & Larance to proceed to their encampments early Tomorrow to gain further information & protect the Indians if necessary.

6th, Friday : Mr. McDougald and party gone to the Indian Tents & in the course of the day sent Adams after them, and directions to the Gentlemen at Point de Roche to join them if necessary. Made a further reduction of our establishment by sending three men to Point de Roche. Duford arrived with a small quantity of Buffaloe meat and Southerland brought a load of fish from the Big Island. Two men arrived from Isle à Crosse with the Winter Express by which I have a Letter from the Govr. in Chief Dated York Factory 19th Decr. He directs me to apply to the N.W. Coy. for the restitution of property lodged in their hands last year at Berens House by Mr. McAulay. He informs me that he has given Mr. Clarke instructions to supply from Isle à Crosse whatever goods may be required for the use of this Department. I am directed to have all the old Spirit Kegs collected and filled with Salt to be taken out in the Canoes; this is impracticable as the greater part are broke down for the purpose of making small Kegs for Voyaging after Indians, and the remainder are staved and unserviceable; our stock of provisions is so limited and time is so valuable after the opening of the navigation that it would be dangerous to encumber the Canoes with Salt which I have no doubt will satisfactorily account for not complying with his instructions on this point. I am glad to learn that every preparation is making for the arrangement of the Athabasca affairs next Season. The Govr. declines advancing Mr. McAulay's Salary, his Veto is unfortunately too late as that Gentleman is engaged for two years at an increase of £20 p annum, there was no alternative but to leave Gt. Slave Lake District at the mercy of the N.W. during the Summer;

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April this explanation will I trust be satisfactory and apply to all the
 1821 other Gentlemen whose Salary's have been advanced and who
 in like manner would have retired. The Governor assures me
 that the necessary instructions have been sent relative to the
 Pemican for the Brigade, and that a sufficient number of men
 will be engaged at Red River to bring in the early Canoes. My
 best acknowledgements are due to the Governor for his polite
 attention to my personal comforts. I have a Letter from Mr.
 Clarke by the same conveyance Dated 23rd Ultimo, by which
 I am concerned to learn that he either will not or cannot afford
 any assistance to this Department: he has not engaged any
 of his people, his Officers decline acting under him, and he is
 likely to make but few returns, he is apprehensive that a suffi-
 cient quantity of provisions will not be furnished for the Bri-
 gades, in short his Letter is any thing but satisfactory, and until
 Officers are found who will enter into the spirit of the business
 with judgement, zeal and energy the Compys. Affairs cannot
 prosper. Soon after the arrival of the Express some malicious
 person about the Fort (Lamallice is suspected) informed the
 Indians that they would be equally miserable this ensuing
 summer as last, no Ammunition or Rum being expected from
 Isle à la Crosse which alarmed and created so much discontent
 that they were on the eve of going to the North West in a body,
 I however called them together and by a long speech restored
 tranquility, they however assured me that if we did not come
 into the country next season better provided than last fall, they
 would immediately join the opposition.

7th, Saturday: Severe frost and very cold. Sent a train to
 the Big Island for fish and received a load from thence. Four
 men cutting and hauling ice for the Ice House.¹ Clouston gone

¹ The Ice House was a normal and important feature of a fort. In it meat
 was kept fresh until the brigade went out in the spring, and provisions made in
 the summer were kept until the winter. In 1815 Thomas Vincent was instructed
 that 'The Geese killed in the Spring hunt may be preserved thro' the summer by
 laying them up in the Ice-houses with layers of snow or broken ice rammed close
 between them. These Ice Houses should be formed by digging large and deep
 excavations in the ground, the sides of which must be supported by log walls
 and the top, above ground, well covered over with a double roof set 2 or 3 feet
 apart, both composed of thick thatch. If the mass of ice be considerable the

to visit 'Big Bubbies' band at the Rivierre Embarras. Mr. April
 McDougald returned after having seen the Indians taken to 1821
 Fort Chipewyan, it appears they received Credits from Mr.
 Andries at Harrisons House last fall, and gave him the pro-
 duce of their hunts about a month ago, they were on the way to [fo. 113]
 this Fort, when the N.W. met and took them to Fort Chipe-
 wyan; their object in coming here was to get a supply of ammuni-
 tion, the few provisions they had were taken from them at the
 other side; they were attended by a N.W. Halfbreed when
 McDougald fell in with them, and Bouche has accompanied
 them to their Tents. When McDougald was within a mile of
 the Fort, the Scauteaux Indian who Murdered Keveny¹ and
 two N.W. Halfbreeds rushed towards him from behind a point
 of Land armed with Guns and War clubs, on their near ap-
 proach McDougald uncovered his Gun and cocked it, but they
 moved to the side of the Track and permitted him to pass un-
 disturbed, no conversation took place, and I am at a loss to
 know what the object of these assassins was, but suspect they
 mistook him for Grignon the Contstable in the dusk of the
 evening being much of a size and dressed nearly alike.

8th, Sunday: The weather continues very cold. Some In-
 dian lads who arrived this morning inform me that they saw
 Swans, Geese & Ducks on the 5th Inst., which is the first
 indication of Spring. Bouche and two men arrived early this
 morning accompanied by a N.W. Indian and his family whom
 they met yesterday on his way from Harrisons House; the
 Indian proposed to join us as the N.W. had treated him
 harshly and gave Bouche all the provisions and Leather he had.
 When about a mile from the Fort, the party who met McDou-
 gald last night came up to them, a scuffle was anticipated and

summer heat will not penetrate so far as to affect the meat. . . . Precautions must
 be taken to prevent any water from the melting of the ice lodging in the Ice
 House, as this would cause the Ice to waste and the meat to spoil.' Sometimes
 the meat was simply put into the Ice House and water was poured over it; the
 water turned immediately to ice and the provisions were protected.

¹ José, the son of the White Partridge. Cf. p. 213, n. 2. The Saulteaux
 were part of the Chippewa tribe, and inhabited the northern shores of Lakes
 Huron and Superior from Georgian Bay to the edge of the prairies and the
 height of land north of Lake Superior; Sault Ste. Marie was their meeting-place.

April all the inmates of our Garrison were under arms to join in the
 1821 fray, but as no violence was offered we did not interfere and the party came in undisturbed:—Our neighbours at the Guard Ho are a set of cowardly villains, they never show their insolence except when they outnumber us in the proportion of two for one, and their present temerity arises from their Knowledge that we are through scarcity of provisions unable to keep our Officers and Men at the Fort. Mr. O'Doherty gone to Point de Roche for the purpose of making some arrangements about the Fisheries. Charlo the Interpreter arrived from his Wintering ground with a tolerable hunt. Clouston returned from 'Big Bubbies' band with a few skins. Several of our Indians gone to Lac de Brochet¹ where they take Jack fish² in great numbers with Bait, and intend paying us another visit in the opening of the navigation previous to their departure for the Summer.

9th, Monday: Fine mild weather. Sent a train to the Big Island for fish and received a load from thence. Four of our people gone to the Old Fort in search of maintenance as we are on the eve of starvation at the Fort.

10th, Tuesday: Weather as yesterday. Our prospects of subsistence are getting very unfavourable; there are not two meals of provisions in the Store, have therefore been under the necessity of making a further reduction in our establishment by sending three men to the Old Fort with Hooks and lines. Four men employed in filling the Ice house;—the others attending the charcoal Fire, Cutting Timber &c &c. Received a load of fish from the Big Island. Cayenne the Interpreter and two Indians arrived on a visit, and to receive their Spring presents. Mr. O'Doherty returned from the Fishery by whom I regret to learn that our Officers & Men at Point de Roche are actually starving, as the Fishery is very unproductive. Mr. Oxley I understand makes himself very obnoxious and much discord prevails. A fisherman & Nets are sent to their assistance.

¹ Now called Jackfish Lake; it is not far from the mouth of the Athabaska River, and was used as a fishery both by the men from Fort Wedderburn and by those of Beren's House.

² Pike.

11th, Wednesday : The weather very cold with snow. Kay-
enne & followers gone to their encampment. Received a
load of fish from the Big Island and sent a Train thither. We
are merely living from hand to mouth on a very scanty allow-
ance. The people employed as yesterday.

12th, Thursday : The atmosphere heavy with a little Snow or
rime. Received a small supply of Fish from the Big Island.
Clouston busily occupied for several days past in repairing the
Iron work previous to his departure for Berens House.

13th, Friday : Stormy weather and cold. Received three
train loads of Buffaloe meat and one load fish. Mr. Manson
arrived from Point de Roche by whom I regret to learn that
our people there are suffering great privations and for three
days past have subsisted chiefly on rock weed, also that Mr.
Oxley who has charge of the party is exerting himself to infuse
a spirit of sedition amongst the Officers and Men. Directed
Lamallice the Guide to go to the Rivierre Embarras for Train
and Snow shoe Timber ; he made several frivolous objections
and at length concluded that he was exempt from such Duty by
his engagement, I however overruled it and gave him a severe
lecture on his conduct throughout the winter: hitherto I did
not consider it prudent to come to a rupture with this fellow
on account of his influence with the Indians, but as our Furs
are now safely housed I waved all ceremony and so completely
brought him to a sense of his folly that I think he will be more
circumspect in future. Wrote Mr. Oxley a note directing him
to remove to Lac de Brochet with the people, where there is a
good fishery, and to obey any future instructions given by Mr.
Brown as District Master.

14th, Saturday : Severe weather. Sent Bouche to Point de
Roche for the purpose of conducting the people through the
woods to Lac de Brochet. Three men gone thither in search
of their livelihood. Received a load of fish from the Big
Island. The Indians gone to a Drinking match to Fort
Chipewyan.

15th, Sunday : Weather as yesterday. Received a load of
fish from the Big Island and sent two trains thither. The men
who were sent to the Old Fort a few days ago returned to the

April Big Island as they could not take so many as would keep them
1821 in existence; directed Mr. O'Doherty to conduct them to Lac
de Brochet Tomorrow.

16th, Monday: The weather very cold for the season of the year. Mr. O'Doherty gone to Lac de Brochet & Gagnon to the Big Island for fish. Bouche and two men returned from Point de Roche, where Mr. Oxley and some of the people remain as the Fishery is improving; by them received a load from the Big Island. The people variously employed.

[fo. 114] *17th, Tuesday:* The weather to day has undergone the changes of Frost, Thaw, Rain & Snow. Sent three Trains to the Rivierre Embarras for Pitch, Sled & Snow shoe Timber. Lezett the Chief took his departure for the season; he and a band of North West Indians intend being at Portage La Loche about the month of August, and if they find that we are coming in as formidable as we state, they will have a quantity of provisions in readiness & join us in a body. I regret to learn that the Fishery at Lac de Brochet has entirely failed, one man has arrived here and the others are gone to the Old Fort.

18th, Wednesday: The weather continues severe. Bouche gone to the Big Island for a load of fish; this fellow is coming to his senses and I think may still make a useful Man; the recent sharp discipline which our half Gentry have had seems to have an extraordinary good effect on them. Wrote the following Letter. vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 18th April, 1821.

To, MR. GEORGE KEITH, or the Gentn. in charge }
of the N.W. Coys. affairs at Fort Chipewyan. }

SIR,

I understand Mr. Aulay McAulay bought a quantity of provisions from the N.W. Coy. through Mr. John Stuart one of their Partners at Pierre aux Calumit in the month of December 1819 to the amount of 2780 Livres, and that the N.W. Co. hold as Security for the payment thereof property belonging to the Honble. H. Bay Co. to the amount of 13777 Livres 12 Sous calculating provisions and property at the

N.W. Coy. prices of such articles in Athabasca, thereby leaving a Balance of 10,997 Livres 12 Sous Halifax Curry. or April 1821
 £412 ,, 8 ,, 2 Sterling in favour of the Honble. H.B. Co.
 agreeable to the enclosed statement¹ which I have to request may
 be repaid to me without delay, or property to that amount
 lodged in my hands on behalf of the said Honble. H.B. Co.—

I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Lamallice returned with four loads Sled & Snow Shoe Timber, paddles & Gum. Received a load of fish. The people employed in squaring Timber for building &c. &c. The men who are scattered about the Lake in quest of their own subsistence I regret to learn have commenced eating their dogs, this is a most vexatious circumstance, and unless immediately checked will be ruinous to the business next winter, have therefore intimated that every such offence will be severely punished. Wittman came from Point de Roche where I understand Mr. Andries and his people arrived last night.

19th, Thursday: The weather as yesterday. Two men gone to the Big Island for Fish. Mr. Andries people arrived from Harrisons House with a few skins & provisions: he is detained at Point de Roche through lameness and being Snow blind. Mr. Oxley & Grignon paid us a visit expecting an invitation to remain at the Fort, but our Stock of provisions is so low that they must return to Point de Roche tomorrow.

20th, Friday: The weather still cold and unpleasant. Mr. [fo. 115]
 Oxley, Grignon, and five men gone to Point de Roche. Received a load of fish from the Big Island. Gaudorie who was sent Express to Isle ala Crosse on the 22nd Ult for a supply of Rum, Powder & Cloth arrived this afternoon, by him I have recd. a Letter from Mr. Clarke dated 3rd Inst.; he refuses to comply with my request notwithstanding the Govr. in Chief's positive orders to the contrary whose high authority he seems to hold in utter contempt: he professes much zeal in the general cause but gives no proof of it. The books of Isle ala Crosse

¹ For the circumstances leading to this claim cf. *supra*, pp. 46-7, 123: for currency standards cf. p. 186, n. 1.

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1819.			N.W. Currency.		H. Cy.	
Dec	29	To 4 small old Axes, Deld.				
		at P a C	12	"		
	"	" 4 $\frac{1}{6}$ doz Indian Awls Do.	20	16		
	"	" 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Ivory Combs Do.	9	"		
	"	" 1 Molton Capot 3 Ells.				
		Do.	30	"		
	"	" 1 Do. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Do.	26	"		
	"	" 2 white Cloth Do. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$.				
		Ells Do.	30	"		
	"	" 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ doz Gun flints . Do.	47	10		
	"	" 2 Guns (Wilson's 1818)				
		Do.	150	"		
	"	" $\frac{1}{4}$ doz fire Steels broke Do.	3	"		
	"	" $\frac{1}{4}$ " Butchers Knives Do.	18	"		
	"	" $\frac{1}{4}$ " roach Do. Do.	12	"		
	"	" 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ yd H.B. red Strouds				
		Do.	37	10		
	"	" 2 " green Do. Do.	50	"		
	"	" 1 checked cotton Shirt				
		Do.	18	"		
	"	" 2 Steel Traps . Do.	100	"		
	"	" 6 qts White Rum . Do.	480	"		
		North West Curry. Livres	1043	16	Livres. 2087	Sous. 12
	"	" 9 Galls Spirits (white				
		Rum) Do.	.	.	5760	"
	"	" 90 lb Ball Do.	.	.	810	"
	"	" 80 lb Powder . . . Do.	.	.	1920	"
	"	" 100 lb Tobacco . . . Do.	.	.	3200	"
		Halifax Currency	Liv:	13777	12

Livres. Sous.

To Balance, £ Sterlg. 412 ,, 8,, 2, H. Cy. Livres 10997 ,, 12

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT

323

WITH THE HONBLE. HUDSON'S BAY COY. Cr. April
1821

1819.			N.W. Currency.		H. Cy.	
		By the following provns. to } A. McAulay, viz . . }				
Dec	29	By 460 lb fresh meat . .	460	„		
	„	„ 47 „ Grease . . .	282	„		
	„	„ 103 „ Pounded meat. .	309	„		
		By the follg. provns to A. Dejarlois viz . . .				
1820	30	„ 25 lb fresh meat . .	25	„		
Jany	2	„ 20 „ Do.	20	„		
	6	„ 210 „ Do.	210	„		
	„	„ 8 „ Grease . . .	48	„		
	„	„ 12 „ Pounded meat .	36	„		
		North West Cy. Livres	1390	„	2780	„
		By Balance			10997	12
		Halifax Curry . . . Livres			13777	12

Fort Wedderburn, Athabasca Lake
18th April 1821

p The Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy.
(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

April if regularly Kept will show that he had abundant means to
 1821 supply the wants of this District, and his conduct on this
 occasion evinces an anxious wish to injure the affairs of Atha-
 basca because it happens not to be under his own management.
 I regret to learn that disturbances of a serious nature are break-
 ing out at Isle ala Crosse, and I cannot help thinking that they
 in a great measure arise from Mr. Clarkes own folly; instead
 of opposing the enemy by judicious, cool, and determined
 measures, he encourages broils & squabbles between the Offi-
 cers & men, and for his amusement sends a parcel of Bullies
 out to decide important differences by pugilistic combats,
 which have no other effect than giving our Opponents a pre-
 text for renewing their former aggressions in other parts of the
 Country where we are less able to contend with them:—The
 N.W. Co. are not to be put down by Prize fighting, but by
 persevering industry, Economy in the business arrangements,
 and a firm maintenance of our rights not by the fist but by
 more deadly weapons. Mr. Clarkes bullying system appears
 to me childish and ridiculous, the expense is enormous, in the
 article of Spirits alone, more has this season been expended on
 these fellows than at any Post in Athabasca for the purposes of
 Trade; Popularity seems to be the height of Mr. Clarkes ambi-
 tion, and he would sacrifice both the Compy. and their affairs
 to gain the title of ' Bon Garcon ' with the Canadians on whom
 more property has this year been lavished than the Beaver
 hunters of Isle ala Crosse. It is no unusual thing to expend a
 Keg of Spirits at a dance, the same quantity now at Berens
 House would furnish provisions for our Brigade a great part
 of the voyage. Mr. Manson one of Clarkes Officers is now
 here and is engaged to accompany Mr. Brown to the Moun-
 tain in Spring; he threatens that if this Gentleman does not
 immediately make his appearance at Isle ala Crosse, he will not
 forward the Pemican required for the use of the Athabasca
 Brigade, knowing the lengths Mr. Clarke would go to indulge
 his malice, I would to prevent any risk on that score send this
 Gentleman forthwith, but provisions are so scarce here, and
 the season is now so far advanced that he cannot attempt go-
 ing from hence until the navigation opens, and if Mr. Clarke

puts his threat into effect it will be a death blow to our prospects, and in my opinion he should forfeit any balance due to him in the hands of the Compy. None of his men are yet engaged, and he delays this important duty merely for the purpose of embarrassing the Compys. affairs, on the whole this Gentlemans conduct is so diametrically opposite to what it ought to be that the most exemplary punishment I trust awaits him¹; his folly, obstinacy, and self importance has been more baneful to the Compys. interests in the North than all the opposition of the North West Coy. Received a few lines from Mr. Greill of Berens House, his Indians have made few skins, and will not exert themselves as our Stores are empty; two of his people are sent to this place as their services are not required at Berens House, and he cannot afford to maintain them. O'Doherty sent a man from the Old Fort to inform me that five N.W. principal Indians had determined on joining us, and wanted a few articles on Credit which are made up; Mr. McVicar & Bouche are to start early in the Morning for the purpose of communicating with them. Received the following Letter from Mr. Keith, vizt.:

April
1821

FORT CHIPEWYAN, 20th April, 1821

MR. GEO. SIMPSON.

SIR,

The press of business on hand, since the receipt of your Letter has unavoidably protracted the reply. I have however to inform you that I have seen the articles of agreement entered into between Mr. Stuart & Mr. McAulay in Decemr. 1819, but as the Documents relative thereto do not happen to be at this post, I must altogether decline entering into a discussion of the validity of the claims you exhibit. I shall merely observe that the statement of N.W. Co. prices is grossly incorrect. Mr. Leith is the principal Agent of the N.W. Co. in this Department, and has got all the accounts, it is to him

¹ Despite such criticism of Clarke, the H.B.C. not only did not punish him in any way, but they insisted on his inclusion in the amalgamated concern, since the agents of the N.W.C. wanted to exclude him. See Appendix B.

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April you ought to apply, and I am confident that he will on arrival
1821 here in Spring afford you every satisfaction which the subject
of your communication to me requires.—&c &c

(signed) GEO. KEITH.

21st, Saturday : The weather bitterly cold. Mr. McVicar, Boucher and a man gone to visit the N.W. Indians at the Old Fort. The N.W. Co. I understand are equally short of provisions as we are, and have sent the greater part of their people to the Fisheries; the Guard House is consequently abandoned, Black, McGillivray and their retinue of Murderers and Bullies having removed to Fort Chipewyan yesterday, leaving only an Officer and man in charge of the establishment on this side.

22nd, Sunday : Weather as yesterday. We have been under the necessity of making a further reduction of our establishment, Mr. Vigneau and four men being sent to Point de Roche this morning. Recd. a load of Fish from the Big Island. The Wife of Kayenne the Interpreter died this morning which deprives us of his services during the Summer. Mr. O'Doherty and the English Chief accompanied by several of the Indians from Harrisons House arrived from the Old Fort
[fo. 116] for the purpose of getting some ammunition; they inform me that all the N.W. Indians from that quarter are to join us on the arrival of our Brigade in the Fall.

23rd, Monday : Fine mild weather. Poucecoupee, Piche and several of our Indians gone to Lac de Brochet and are to pay me a visit previous to my departure. Received a supply of Fish from the Big Island. Mr. McVicar returned from the Old Fort; he has succeeded in attaching to our cause the 'Tripe de Roche' and four of the principal N.W. Indians, they are gone to make provisions, and will deliver the produce of their Summer hunts to Bouche at Portage La Loche in the early part of August; from present appearances we shall have all the N.W. Indians in the fall if we have the means of equipping them. I am grieved to learn that our people are literally starving about the Lake living chiefly on Rock weed; 30 Dollars were given for a dog the other day at the Old Fort which was consumed at one scanty meal. Sent four men to

cut timbers for a new House, they have provisions for eight April days. Our Stock of ammunition is nearly exhausted, and our 1821 Indians will be reduced to the same misery they experienced last Summer; had Mr. Clarke rendered the assistance I applied for, or even repaid the quantity lent him in the Fall, it would now be of the most essential importance, but this Gentleman's ingenuity seems to be exerted to annoy and harass us in every respect in which he is successful to an eminent degree.

24th, Tuesday: The weather clear and cold. The Little Chief and three Indians arrived from Harrisons House for their presents and Summer Supplies, the former very much attached to our cause and the Store being empty made him a present of a full suit of my own Clothes; the Gentlemen have parted with their Blankets to accomodate the others. Clouston & John Laserte gone to Berens House, the former to relieve Mr. Greill in charge of the Post. Gave him the following instructions, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *24th April, 1821.*

MR. ROBT. CLOUSTON.

SIR,

1st. On your arrival at Berens House Mr. Greill will deliver charge of the Post into your hands with an Inventory of whatever Goods & Stores remain.

2nd. The Crees I understand are desirous to visit me here, but as we have neither goods nor rum to give them, I have to request that you will endeavour to persuade them to continue their hunts in the neighbourhood of Pierre aux Calumit until my arrival, when I shall have a communication with the Chief and his band. If they are desirous to have the Post removed to the Forks of Pembina River or the Salt Springs, and that you think it will be advantageous to the Trade, you will make the necessary preparations for building in the course of the summer.

3rd. Fabien¹ is a useful man, you will therefore engage him to remain inland at 11 or 1200 Livres.

¹ Not identified.

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April 4th. Every exertion must be made to raise Bark in the
1821 course of the Summer, I shall expect not less than eight
Canoes from the Post next Season.

5th. Take the utmost care of the provisions, and let the Pounded meat and Fat be made into Pemican for the use of the Brigade; one bag of 90 lb wt. for my Light Canoe.

6th. Inform the Crees that I am desirous they should devote their attention exclusively to animal hunting this season, and that if industrious they will be handsomely rewarded in the Fall, and let them prepare abundance of dressed Leather, Parchment & Babiche.

7th. If any considerable quantity of grease is collected make about 50 lbs Soap for New Caladonia to be delivered when the canoes pass in the early part of August.

8th. I shall endeavour to send you a few seeds which you will sow and let the utmost attention be paid to the Garden throughout the Season.

9th. The Pemican Canoe will start from hence about the 10th or 12th proxo.; it must not be detained one hour at Pierre aux Calumit, and you will give no more provisions than are absolutely necessary for the passage to Lac La Loche.

10th. Let the utmost attention be paid to the Fishery in order to save dried provisions, I expect that none of the latter will be consumed at the Post after the River breaks up.

11th. Three men will be sufficient for the Summer Establishment if the Post is not removed, therefore let Raiche, John Laserte & Fabien remain, if the two latter do not engage they will be relieved by others as the Canoes pass, let me Know by Mr. Greill if Fabien renews his contract.

12th. Mr. Greill & Gilliaume will come to this place by the first open water, and you will keep the other men actively employed until my arrival about the 27th or 28th proxo.

13th. If Obechon brings any rum from Isle ala Crosse you will take charge thereof, and let the utmost care be taken of it, as you cannot expect a fresh supply before the early part of August; if he brings any Powder let it be forwarded to this place immediately.

14th. The Post of Berens House has been hitherto sadly

neglected, but from your wonted industry, preseverance & April
 Œconomical arrangements, I entertain sanguine hopes that it's 1821
 affairs will very soon bear a different aspect, and that altho'
 hitherto a losing concern, it will under your judicious manage-
 ment be an important auxiliary to the District.

I remain, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

25th, Wednesday : Weather as yesterday. Sent two men to
 Lac de Brochet in search of their own maintenance. Mr.
 Andries arrived from Point de Roche, the people are barely
 existing there. Received a few fish from the Big Island. Our
 table for several weeks has been very sparingly furnished, and
 we are likely to have empty stomachs until the Lake breaks up
 as the Fisheries are daily becoming more unproductive; the
 first Goose of the Season made it's appearance for dinner to
 day; this sapient bird is the harbinger of Spring in these [fo. 117]
 dreary regions.

26th, Thursday : Fine gentle thaw. Sent five men in differ-
 ent directions to search for their own subsistence. Mr.
 Chastellain carelessly left a dog in the Fur Store last night that
 gnawed a few skins, the damage has been appraised and
 charged to his account which may perhaps tend to make him
 more circumspect in future. Engaged the English Chief & his
 Son as hunters for McKenzies River which is a most impor-
 tant thing towards establishing that District; this Indian
 accompanied Sir A. McKenzie in his Voyage of Discovery,
 and knows the country well; he it was that volunteered his
 Services and conducted Mr. Andries to our lower establish-
 ments during the administration of Archd. N. McLeod, and
 thereby in all probability saved the lives of Mr. Clarke and his
 people as it was intended to Murder some and send the rest to
 the Columbia.

27th, Friday : Weather as yesterday. Sent another party off
 in search of maintenance and we have now only two men in
 the Fort besides Officers. The N.W. I understand are equally
 short of provisions.

28th, Saturday : A considerable fall of Snow in the course of

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April to day, and the weather very boisterous. The Wood Cutters
1821 returned for a supply of provisions, they have squared the
Beams and principal Timbers for the New house.

29th, Sunday: Stormy Weather. An Iroquois N.W. Engageè offered his services this morning, but I declined receiving him, as it might be a pretext for fresh quarrels with our Opponents, but recommended his joining the Free Iroquois in Peace River, and gave him a gun and ammunition for that purpose which he is to repay in provisions; their people are even in a worse state of discipline than our men, and I imagine will have great difficulty in bringing their Canoes in next Season, as the greater part of them are returning to Canada for the purpose of entering the Companys Service.

30th, Monday: The weather mild. Messrs. Andries & McDougald gone to Point de Roche. Received a load of fish from the Big Island. I regret to learn that our people at the Big Point are starving, no Geese having yet made their appearance there. Charlo our Chipewyan Interpreter I understand has engaged with the N.W. Co., as we have no Rum or Ammunition to give him. Three men employed in squaring Timber for the New House.

May 1821

May *1st, Tuesday:* Fine warm day and the Ice decaying rapidly. Sent two men to the Big Island for fish. We have only three men now about the Fort on account of the scarcity of provisions; indeed all hands are now on short allowance and we have no prospect of relief until the Lake breaks up.

2nd, Wednesday: Weather as yesterday. Great numbers of Ducks & Geese have been flying about to day, but few within gun shot. Received some fish from the Big Island.

3rd, Thursday: The weather cold & raw. Mr. Andries sent two men from the Big Point to inform me that several of our Indians are on the eve of joining the N.W. in consequence of a report having been circulated by Lamallice's family that we have both Rum & ammunition *en Cache*, altho we gave none to them, and that unless a supply is immediately sent they will

accept the liberal offers of our Opponents. Mr. McVicar is May
going down to see them tomorrow, but as he has nothing to 1821
give them except fair words, I fear it will be of little avail.
Directed Mr. Manson to proceed to the Big Point with
McVicar where he is to remain until the Athabasca River
breaks up and then proceed to Lac La Loche with a Canoe and
six men for Pemican. Wrote the following notes, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, 3rd May, 1821.

MR. MANSON.

SIR,

You will leave the Big Point with a canoe and six men
immediately on the opening of the Athabasca River and pro-
ceed with the utmost expedition to Lac La Loche where I
expect you will find six bags of Pemican with which you will
return immediately; but if it has not been forwarded from Isle
ala Crosse you will proceed thither and receive thirty bags for
the use of this Department, twelve of which you will leave at
Lac La Loche and the remaining eighteen are to be brought
hither without delay.

I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

FORT WEDDERBURN, 3rd May, 1821.

MR. JOHN McLEOD, }
Lac La Loche. }

SIR,

Mr. Clarke undertook to forward to Lac La Loche six
bags pemican on the ice for the use of our Brigades to the
Portage; if sent have the goodness to deliver them to Mr. Man-
son and let him return without delay, you will also if possible
furnish him with provisions to Berens House. If the Pemi-
can has not been forwarded from Isle ala Crosse, you will be
so good as supply him with provisions to proceed thither and
render him every facility in your power as it is important to
our affairs that he should be here with the least possible de-
lay.—I am, Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

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May
1821

FORT WEDDERBURN, 3rd May, 1821.

JOHN CLARKE, ESQRE., }
Isle ala Crosse.

DEAR SIR,

[fo. 118]

If the six bags pemican you undertook to send to Lac La Loche on the ice have not been forwarded, I request you will deliver to Mr. Manson Thirty bags for the use of this Department with which he is to return immediately. Part of this quantity is required for Mr. Brown who leaves this place for New Caladonia about the 10th Proxo. The remainder of the one hundred bags you will reserve specially for the use of the Athabasca Brigades. If Mr. Pruden has complied with my request of a supply of Powder & Spirits you will be pleased to deliver those articles also into the charge of Mr. Manson, together with 11 lbs Powder lent by Mr. Finlayson to Mr. Spence last fall. Mr. Manson is to proceed with Mr. Brown to the Mountain, and as you have determined on retaining Messrs. McDonald & Perring altho' engaged for Athabasca you will have less occasion for this Gentleman's services and he must on no consideration be detained. I propose leaving this place about the 25th Inst. and hope to get to Isle ala Crosse previous to your departure. Your letter of 3rd Ult came duly to hand.

I remain, Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

4th, Friday: Blowing hard from the West with rain. Messrs. McVicar & Manson started early this morning for the Big point, also three men with a Canoe to be in readiness to proceed for Lac La Loche when the River breaks up.

5th, Saturday: The weather cold and windy. Three Indians arrived from Lac De Brochet with a few Rat Skins & Geese; two of them have taken up their quarters at the Fort through indisposition; in the present state of our larder they are very unwelcome visitors:—from them I learn that Lamallice's family have been sowing the seeds of disaffection among the Indians. Moscheto's have made their appearance in the woods and vegetation begins to revive.

6th, Sunday : Heavy rain during the night and the weather boisterous to day. May 1821

7th, Monday : It rained without intermission through the night and the greater part of to day. There are a number of channels open in the ice which renders it dangerous to travel on the Lake. Our stock of provisions is so low that we have been under the necessity of suspending Timber cutting, and have sent the four men that were so employed to the Big Point in search of their own maintenance, also Glasgow the Cook. There are only ten men & Officers now in the Fort but we have nothing to apprehend from our Opponents as they are equally short handed.

8th, Tuesday : The weather damp & foggy with a little rain. Geese are numerous but shy, our Indians made us a very acceptable present of three to day.

9th, Wednesday : Wind N.E. with sharp frost. Three of our Orkney Fishermen & three Canadians arrived from the Big Island with their Nets &c, the others gone to the Grande Point to fish for the People. Received a note from Mr. McVicar intimating that Charlo the Interpreter & three of our Indians have joined the N.W. in consequence of our having no ammunition to give them and the others are very discontented. The Athabasca River has not yet broke up and the people are suffering much through starvation.

10th, Thursday : Blowing hard from the Westward and the Ice drifting rapidly out of the Channel. Sent the three Canadians who arrived yesterday from the Big Island to the Grand Point, but the ice was so rotten that they were compelled to return. One of our Indians brought us six geese this afternoon.

11th, Friday : Wind Northerly and the weather very cold. Dumaine & Perrault gone to set a Net at the English Island.¹ All the Gentlemen for some time past busily occupied in winding up the accounts & writings of the Season.

12th, Saturday : The weather continues very severe. The Orkney Fishermen preparing their Nets for setting in open Water. Two Indians arrived late this evening with a few

¹ A small island at the west end of Lake Athabaska and west of Potato Island.

May Geese from Lac de Brochet where Pouce Coupee the Chief
 1821 and several others are now encamped; they have in all from
 30 to 40 made Beaver but I suspect they will not deliver them
 up as we have neither goods nor ammunition to give them in
 return; the dearth of Merchandise this Season has been pro-
 ductive of very serious loss, it has enabled the N.W. to de-
 bauch many of our Indians, induced them to carry on a clandes-
 tine trade, and discouraged them from pursuing their Spring
 hunts; an other such year will assuredly ruin our prospects
 in this District.

13th, Sunday: Weather as yesterday. Dumaine & Per-
 rault returned with a few fish. Equiped the Indians that ar-
 rived last night and sent two Canadians to Lac de Brochet for
 their skins. The Orkney Fishermen gone to encamp on the
 English Island.

14th, Monday: The weather milder and warm towards even-
 ing with a little rain. Messrs. Brown & Chastellain sorting
 the Furs, there are a few missing, which if not forth coming
 when the packs are made up will be charged to his account.
 Our nets this morning produced 86 fish. Corcoran had an
 interview with O'Hara of the N.W. this morning who in-
 formed him that our Opponents will scarcely make twenty
 packs furs in the District this year, that the greater part of
 their servants are going down to Montreal, also several
 Officers, and that they are very short of provisions, which has
 prevented their making an attempt to apprehend some of our
 Officers.

15th, Tuesday: Blowing hard with a considerable fall of
 snow and very cold. Received a few fish. A canoe with seven
 men arrived from Colvile House, by them received a Letter from
 Mr. McBean which intimates that our people at that post have
 for several weeks been reduced to the greatest misery by star-
 vation, and that no provisions can be expected from Peace
 River this season; the seven men who arrived had only a raw
 [fo. 119] hide to maintain them on the passage; they have brought the
 bark of two Canoes, but I fear we shall not be able to build them
 as all our people are scattered about the Lake in search of Sus-
 tenance.

16th, Wednesday : The weather continues cold and boisterous. Directed the fishermen to shift their nets to the Quatre fourche¹ and dry all the fish they can collect for the maintenance of the Brigade going out. The Indians who accompanied Dumaine & Perrault on the 13th gave them the slip in Lac de Brochet, and I fear intend giving their skins to the N.W., the men have in consequence returned. May 1821

17th, Thursday : Charming weather and the ice disappearing rapidly. Sent Dumaine & Perrault to the Big Point with a note to Mr. McVicar directing him to send Messrs. Andries & Greill here immediately, also Lamallice, Bouche, and four men for the purpose of building Canoes; Mr. Oxley to take charge of the people and get as many fish dried as possible;—this note will however miss Mr. McVicar as he arrived this evening from Lac de Brochet with abt. 2/3rds of a pack of furs, some dried meat and geese which he got from Poucecoupee's band, and the Indians who were here on the 13th, he informs me that the people at the Big Point were nearly famished before the river broke up, & were compelled to eat several of their dogs, they were so weak through starvation, that out of about forty men he had great difficulty in picking six who were capable of undertaking the voyage to Lac La Loche for pemican. The Athabasca River broke up on the 1st Inst., and Mr. Manson started on the 11th, Mr. Greill arrived from Beren's House on the same day, has about 2½ Packs Furs and one bag of pemican, the Crees from that Post are at Lac de Brochet, and would not hunt for the Brigade as our Stores are empty. If Mr. Clarke has not forwarded the quantity of pemican agreed upon to Lac La Loche, I am under the most serious apprehensions that we shall not be able to get our Canoes out this Season which would be a finishing blow to the Coys. prospects in Athabasca. Two Indians arrived with a few geese this evening.

18th, Friday : The weather continues fine, yet there is a keenness in the air which is by no means seasonable. Sent two men to the Big Point at day break with notes to Messrs.

¹ The point where the Quatre Fourches River flows from Lake Mamawi to form the west outlet of Lake Athabasca, south-west of Potato Island.

May Andries & Oxley to the same effect as those written to Mr.
 1821 McVicar yesterday. Jibotte¹ the Halfbreed Cree Hunter from
 Colville House arrived with a few Geese; engaged him for
 two years as Fort Hunter for this place. Mr. Leith & Joseph
 McGillivray I understand arrived this evening in a Light
 Canoe with ten men from Peace River.

19th, Saturday: Charming weather. Wrote the following
 Letter, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *19th May*, 1821.

JAMES LEITH, ESQRE.,
 Agent for the N.W. Co., Fort Chipewyan. }

SIR,

I took the liberty of addressing Mr. Keith on the 18th
 Ult., relative to a transaction which occurred between Mr.
 John Stuart, Partner of the N.W. Co. at Pierre aux Calumit
 in December 1819, and Mr. Aulay McAulay Clerk in the
 Honble. H.B. Coys. Service. Mr. Keith in reply informs me
 that the application should with more propriety have been
 made to you as principal Agent for the said Coy. in this Depart-
 ment; I therefore beg leave to refer you to my communication
 with that Gentleman and its enclosure which exhibits a Balance
 of £412 ,, 8 ,, 2 in favor of the Honble. Hudsons Bay Co,
 and to request the favor of your either handing me the said
 amount, or an equivalent as security for the payment thereof on
 demand either in London or Montreal. The statement of
 account is made up at what I understand to be the N.W. Coys.
 prices of such articles in this Department, but which Mr.
 Keith informs me is erroneous; if lower than the usual stan-
 dard you will oblige me by correcting it, but if higher I beg to
 submit that if Grease at 9/- p lb, Pounded meat at 4/6 p lb and
 fresh meat at 1/6 p lb, are fair and moderate prices, Spirits
 100 p Ct. O Pf at £6 p Gall, Powder at 18/- p lb Tobacco at
 24/- p lb and Ball @ 6/9 p lb cannot be considered unreason-
 able: Mr Stuarts hand writing in my possession however

¹ Edouard Jibotte was engaged by the H.B.C. in 1820 and stationed at St.
 Mary's, Peace River, in 1820-21.

confirms and establishes the prices of all the articles in that account except Powder & Ball. Mr. Keith makes allusion to certain articles of agreement entered into between Messrs. Stuart & McAulay, but under the peculiarly distressing circumstances that the agreement in question was extorted from Mr. McAulay, and which from it's nature, and the subordinate rank he held in the service, you must be aware cannot hold good either in a Court of Law or Equity, but must if exposed reflect indelible disgrace on the Gentleman who so unfeelingly exacted it and on those who might attempt to enforce it, I should hope it will not be now brought forward as a pretext for delaying the amicable adjustment of this transaction. I have to request the favor of an early reply and am Sir,

Your mo. Obed. Hum. Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

Four North West Canoes arrived this morning from Peace River. Sent two men to the Big point with a note directing all the Officers, Light Canoe men & Timber Cutters to come here immediately, as the N.W. seem to be collecting their forces to this neighbourhood. Mr. Greill, Lamallice and five men arrived from the Big Point, and John Laserte from Beren's House; by them received notes from Clouston, Beren's House dated 7th & 10th Inst., he has taken charge of this Post, and seems to have made a favorable impression on the Crees; the greater part of them are now at Lac de Brochet hunting Geese and mean to return in the course of a month hence for the purpose of making provisions; he has only 15 lbs of Powder in all, 5 lbs of which are required for this place as we have not a load in the Fort. It is considered advisable to remove the Establishment about fifteen miles higher up the River to the mouth of the Red River being more contiguous to the Buffaloe hunting ground also close to a good summer fishery; he will require in all four men for the Summer establishment. My Light Canoe arrived late this evening from St. Mary's with four men, they took up Mr. Laronde and four of his people who were hunting their way down having no provi-

[fo. 120]

May sions, by them I have Letters from Mr. Finlayson bringing
 1821 the painful accounts, that our people in Peace River are reduced to very great extremities by Famine, indeed the emaciated countenances of those who have arrived bear conclusive evidence of the hardships they have undergone. This misfortune is common all over that District and our Opponents are nearly in the same wretched state, not arising from mismanagement but a casualty which no human foresight could obviate. Throughout Peace River the early part of the Spring was mild, and thereafter the frost became very intense forming a Crust on the Snow, the crackling of which alarmed the animals and prevented the Hunters approaching within gun shot of them altho' they were daily within sight of large herds; many of the Beaver Indians have been starved to death, one of our Iroquois, and three belonging to the North West Coy. have shared the same fate, our Fort Hunter Baptiste Bisson, who is without exception the best large animal hunter in North America lived entirely on parchment for several weeks, and whole families of Indians existed solely on singed Beaver Skins; the North West Co. were at Dunvagon & Vermillion compelled to kill many of their Horses, and the few seed potatoes that were reserved at St. Mary's have been consumed; in short our affairs in that quarter are in a most unfortunate state. The Canoes were not expected to be ready to start for eight or ten days, and poor Finlayson must trust to Providence for his maintenance hither. We have not 50 lbs of Powder in the whole Department, and the scarcity of this article and many other indispensable necessities will prevent the New Caladonia Expedition crossing the Mountain before the Fall: none of the Peace River Iroquois & Canadians will renew their engagements until they reach the Depot: it will be impossible for any of the Canoes to start from hence until Mr. Manson's return with Pemican from Lac La Loche, and from the tenor of Mr. Clarkes last Letter I suspect there is not the quantity at that place which will be required, I have therefore determined on proceeding a head of the Brigades to make the necessary arrangements for their maintenance, and as the North West appear to be going out formidable, I shall for the sake

of security man two Light Canoes, and take out Messrs. May Miles, Brown & Oxley along with me; it is intended that Mr. Brown returns with the New Caladonia Expedition with the utmost dispatch from Norway House, and if every thing is in readiness there agreeable to previous arrangement, I think he may get in sufficiently early to lay up a stock of provisions for the Winter. All the Officers in Peace River have renewed their Engagements Mr. Finlayson excepted, who I fear will not venture to undergo a repetition of the hardships incident to this country in the present forlorn state of the Department. The people sent to the Mountain for the six packs Furs left by Mr. Giasson were prevented by starvation getting to the C  che where they must remain until Mr. Brown proceeds thither. The returns of Peace River surpass any former year amounting to twenty nine Packs of 80 lbs each nearly all prime Beaver, vizt.: St. Marys 15 Packs, Colville House 8 Packs & Fort George 6 Packs; the returns of our Opponents I understand are nearly one third less, vizt.: Dunvagon 8 Packs, Vermillion 6 Packs, and Fort de Pinnette 6 Packs, in all 20 Packs. Our fishery has become very productive but I am grieved to learn that the people at the Big Point are still undergoing great privations; a man arrived from thence at eleven p.m., intimating that the note I sent Mr. Oxley this morning was lost, he is to return thither at day break with directions that all the people come here immediately.

20th, Sunday : The Frost was intense last night and this has been a very boisterous cold day; the channel is again completely blocked up with ice, so that it is impossible to move about in Canoes; our People are all Fasting as the state of the ice does not enable us to get fish. Mr. Brown has this day given up charge of the District to Mr. McVicar and I am glad it has fallen into such competent hands, it is however but justice to say that Mr. Brown's steady, careful, and judicious management, together with his firmness and activity under all our difficulties merits my warmest acknowledgements, and I do not know that the Honble. Coy. have a more faithful servant in their employ. Mr. Miles winding up the accounts of the year, and Chastellain packing the Furs. I have been

May sounding the Peace River men about renewing their en-
 1821 gagements, but their late sufferings appear to have sickened
 them of the country; they expect a very considerable ad-
 vance of Wages at the Depot, but I sincerely trust there
 will be a sufficient number of fresh hands there to bring
 down the market. Mr. Andries & Bouche returned from
 the Big Point.

[fo. 121] *21st, Monday:* The weather continues very cold. Sent two
 Canoes at day break for the people at the Big Point, also those
 at Lac de Brochet. Five North West Canoes arrived from
 Peace River. Our fishermen have been very unfortunate: they
 have lost three Nets in the drift Ice, and taken very few fish,
 so that this has nearly been a fast day also; our people however
 behave remarkably well and there is not a grumble in the Fort,
 altho several of the men have tasted nothing for three days and
 Officers and Women have fasted about half that time. We are
 reduced to the necessity of trading Powder at an extravagant
 price from the N.W. Servants & Indians and have got the
 promise of thirty Beaver skins from one of their Iroquois on
 Credit. Wrote the following Letter, vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN, *22nd May*, 1821.

ROBT. McVICAR, ESQRE., present.

SIR,

With reference to our verbal arrangements I beg to
 trouble you with the following observations on the affairs of
 this District, vizt.:

1st. On the arrival of Mr. Manson with Pemican you will
 dispatch under the charge of one of the Guides as many Canoes
 as there are bags of Torex and let them use the utmost
 expedition on their route to Norway house. If I find there are
 not sufficient provisions for all the Brigades an other supply
 will be forwarded, and I shall have the pleasure of addressing
 you by that conveyance.

2nd. If any quantity of ammunition is provided however
 small a part thereof must be given to Mr. Andries who will
 proceed accompanied by Mr. McDougald one man and all the

Indians he can get, to the Salt River,¹ for the purpose of laying up a stock of provisions, and you will send a Canoe and three men to meet him there about the 25th of August who are to bring back a cargo of Salt (about 30 Bags) and any provisions he may have secured in the event of McKenzie's River not being established this season; on this subject you will hear from me more particularly by the first Canoes from Norway House.

3rd. In the event of Mr. Finlayson's leaving no Powder at Colville House on his way down you will give Mr. Laronde a proportion of whatever you may receive.

4th. Lezett and a band of North West Indians who joined us this Spring are to be in the vicinity of Portage La Loche with all the provisions they have collected about the latter end of July waiting the arrival of our Canoes, I would therefore recommend your sending Wakan Bouche there about that time and the Officer in charge of the Brigade will have instructions to give him a supply of such articles as the Indians are most in need of, he must use every exertion to get all they have and take it to the Fort, where it must be held sacred for the use of the Brigades going to their destinations in the Fall.

5th. If you find it impracticable through a scarcity of provisions to build the large House, let the small one be completed, and the Houses in the Fort and at the Fisheries repaired in the early part of the Season.

6th. You will keep all the Officers actively employed in looking after the Indians during the Summer, and let them be protected in the event of the N.W. Coy. renewing their violent aggressions of last Season; Collisions with our Opponents must be avoided if possible, but on all occasions let the rights of the Coy be maintained with firmness and determination.

7th. If any of the men are desirous to renew their contracts you may engage Prime Boutes @ 17, and good Middlemen at 1300 Livres, and every man capable of wielding a paddle, must go out, the Summer men excepted.

8th. Let me entreat that not a particle of dried Provisions or Grease be consumed during the Summer, and that your Fort Hunters & fishermen be kept actively employed.

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 3, n. 4.

May 9th. In the month of August it will be necessary to make
 1821 Hay for the winter provender of three Horses, and early in
 the Fall a large quantity of drift wood should be collected. I
 expect that each woman will provide 50 Bundles of Watappe.
 Let a Man be sent to Fond du Lac for a Grind Stone.

Wishing you a pleasant & prosperous Summer, I remain
 Dear Sir, Your mo. Obedt. Humble Servt.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

22nd, Tuesday: Blowing fresh and very cold. Wrote the
 following notes, vizt.:

'Mr. Simpson requests the favor of an answer to a Letter
 he wrote Mr. Leith on the 19th Inst. "relative to the transac-
 tions which took place between Messrs. Stuart & McAulay at
 Pierre aux Calumit in December 1819".'

FORT WEDDERBURN, *22nd May*, 1821.

DUNCAN FINLAYSON, ESQRE.

DEAR SIR,

I am really grieved at your sufferings and trust that you
 and the people are safe. Keep up your spirits, the good cheer
 at the Depot will efface the recollection of our miseries in
 Athabasca. Mr. McVicar has got a list of the men and you
 will be so good as make the necessary arrangements about
 getting the Brigade off with the utmost dispatch and appoint-
 ing the Crews for the Canoes. If Mr. Manson does not bring
 sufficient Pemican for the whole let as many Canoes with fifteen
 Packs each as there are bags of Tureau start under the charge of
 [fo. 122] Magnion who must have particular instructions about keeping
 them dry as several were damaged last year, the other Canoes
 will proceed as soon as you have the means under the charge
 of Lamallice. Let every Guide & man who can wield a
 paddle come out except those appointed to remain inland.
 You will receive a few lines from me by the Pemican Canoe. I
 intend being off by day break tomorrow and wishing you a
 pleasant passage, I remain Dear Sir,

Your mo. Obedt. humble St.

(signed) GEO. SIMPSON.

This is another Fast day with us and I fear our Canoe men will be in a wretched state before we get to Isle ala Crosse having only 1 Bag Pemican, a little dried meat & a few Geese to maintain 20 men and four passengers for about nine days. May 1821

23rd, *Wednesday : Athabasca River.*—Took my departure from Fort Wedderburn at 2 O'Clock A.M. accompanied by Messrs. Brown Miles & Oxley in two light Canoes with twenty men, were impeded by the ice a short time near the Bustard Island, and arrived at the Big Point at 8 O'Clock where I found several of our people who were procuring a very scanty living by hooks & lines. Had an interview with the English Chief and his band who threatened to join the N.W. as we had no ammunition to give them, they however consented to remain staunch until the arrival of our early Brigade in August when I promised that all their wants would be supplied. Proceeded at 12 O'Clock; passed a large encampment of N.W. people & two canoes going to the Fort with men for the light Canoes. Mr. Brown's Canoe sustained much damage in crossing the Bar & put ashore to Gum. Fell in with the 'Swan' who gave me a few Geese and encamped at 8 O'Clock.

24th, *Thursday :* Embarked at two O'Clock; Breakfasted at the Forks of River Embarras; the weather very unfavourable and our people so much worn out by starvation that they are unable to make an expeditious journey. Landed at 8 O'Clock.

25th, *Friday : Beren's House.* Left our encampment at 2 O'Clock; Breakfasted at nine; the weather very cold with wind and heavy rain: arrived at this place at eleven p.m., found the house deserted, Clouston having gone a few miles higher up the River for the purpose of building at the request of the Indians.

26th, *Saturday :* Started at four O'Clock a.m. Raining in torrents; Breakfasted with Clouston at the entrance of the Red River where he is erecting a house; the situation is good and there is a tolerable Summer Fishery which renders it preferable to Berens House; Buffaloe & Deer are numerous in the immediate vicinity and the Crees promised to be industrious during the Summer, they are now at the Goose Hunt in Lac de Brochet and expected back in a few days; Clouston has

May not a particle of Goods, no spirits and only 10 lbs of Powder,
 1821 3 of which he must send Mr. McVicar as there is not a load of
 ammunition at the Fort. Reembarked at twelve O'Clock after
 making several necessary arrangements with Clouston and
 encamped at 8 O'Clock.

27th, Sunday: *Little Athabasca River*.—Left our encampment at 2 A.M.; breakfasted and finished our Provisions at the Forks of Pembina River; saw a great many Buffaloe & Deer and sent two men ashore to hunt; proceeded a few miles up the River and put up early waiting the return of our hunters.

28th, Monday: *Pine Portage*.—Remained at our encampment until 4 A.M. waiting the arrival of our hunters, but not making their appearance I determined on proceeding with one canoe and directed Messrs Brown & Oxley to remain with the other until the return of the people; encamped at nine O'Clock at the upper end of the Portage, our crew have lost much of their vigour in consequence of the want of Provisions.

[fo. 123] 29th, Tuesday: *Lac La Loche*.—Embarked at two A.M. passed several Indians but they had nothing to give us; got to Portage La Loche at 10 O'Clock and had Canoes & Cargo transported across by 5 P.M. found the Lake covered with drift ice and got to this establishment at 7 O'Clock where I was surprised to find Mr. Manson and our people who left Athabasca for Pemican on the 10th Inst.; here they are waiting the arrival of Mr. McLeod from Isle ala Crosse with a load of Pemican as Mr. Clarke neglected to forward any upon the Ice which will detain our Brigade nearly a month later than would otherways have been the case and throw the affairs of Athabasca into much confusion. By a note from Mr. Clarke dated 16th Inst. it would appear that he was prevented forwarding the Pemican on the Ice by the disturbances at Isle ala Crosse,¹ but this turns out to be an empty excuse as I find that eight

¹ Clarke's letter to Simpson is in MS. H.B.C. B. 89/b/2 fo. 38^r. The disturbances referred to were the very strained relations between the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. posts at Ile-à-la-Crosse which led Clarke to assemble a council of officers on 12th April, 1821, in which defence measures were passed which included firing after due warning at any armed detachment of N.W.C. men coming within gun shot of the H.B.C. post.

light trains came here within these few weeks and they might May
have conveyed the necessary quantity, but if I am at liberty to 1821
judge from present appearances Mr. Clarkes sole aim seems
to be to embarrass the general affairs.

30th, *Wednesday*: Messrs. Brown & Oxley joined us this
morning and we are unable to proceed on account of the Ice.
Wrote Mr. McVicar giving some directions relative to the
Brigade, also to Mr. McLeod directing that whatever Pemican
may come from Isle ala Crosse be forwarded by Mr. Manson
without loss of time as the Canoes will not start from Fort
Wedderburn until his arrival.

31st, *Thursday*: The ice having partially receded to the
opposite side of the Lake in the course of the night, we started
at 2 A.M.; called at the Fishery & got half a net on which we
must entirely depend for sustenance until we get to Isle ala
Crosse, as there is not a particle of provisions at the House;
proceeded along shore about ten miles and traversed the Lake
through a narrow channel in the Ice, but on our arrival at the
East side of the Lake the wind set in from the N.W. and in a
few minutes we were hemmed in on all sides by large fields of
ice which compelled us to put up for the night:—unable to
set our net & the people begin to exhibit fears of starvation.

June 1821

1st, *Friday*: *Rivierre La Loche*.—The nipping Frosts did June
for the first time this season remit their severity last night and 1821
the weather has been remarkably hot to day. Left our en-
campment at four A.M. and effected our passage through chan-
nels in the ice to the opposite side of the Bay where we again put
up being unable to proceed. Sent Mr. Brown's Canoe for a
supply of Fish, and before its return our Guide discovered a
channel to the mouth of the River, I therefore determined
on proceeding alone, and at six O'Clock effected the passage.
Encamped and caught a few carp of bad quality.

2nd, *Saturday*: *Lac de Bouef*.—Embarked at two A.M.;
descended Rivierre La Loche, which was very low and got to
the entrance of this Lake at 10 A.M. where we were obstructed

June by fields of Ice and remained in Camp until 9 P.M. when we
1821 attempted the large traverse, but were compelled to land at
mid-night on the North side of the Lake.

3rd, Sunday : Proceeded on our Route at one a.m. and at
four O'Clock came up to a field of Ice near the Sandy bar which
again obstructed us and landed at the mouth of a small River:
at 10 A.M. Messrs. Brown & Oxley joined us and we were under
the necessity of putting up for the day as the ice drifted in
large masses towards the shore.

[fo. 124] 4th, Monday : The weather stormy with a little rain; at 1 P.M.
part of the ice cleared away which enabled us to proceed a few
miles along shore, but at 3 O'Clock we were again compelled
to encamp; fell in with Calveez and his band (Isle ala Crosse
Crees) who were actually starving, therefore could render us
no assistance; our people were so much reduced by starvation
as to offer their Blankets & Clothes for a Dog, but he would not
part with it, and I had some difficulty in preventing their tak-
ing it by force.

5th, Tuesday : *Rivierre Cruise*.—At day break we discovered
a Small channel in the ice which communicated with open water,
and altho' blowing hard and the passage very dangerous we
attempted, and got through without any serious damage to our
Canoes; paddled against a strong head wind to the opposite
side of the Lake and saw a Canoe at the distance of two leagues
under sail which I conceived was Mr. McLeod with Pemican
from Isle ala Crosse ; made a signal and gave chase for an hour
but as he was running before the wind, we could not get up
with him. Passed the narrows of Clear Lake and got to the
lower end of this River at 8 O'Clock where we encamped and
in the course of the Night were visited by a tremendous
Thunder Storm.

6th, Wednesday : *Isle ala Crosse*.—Embarked at two
O'Clock A.M. and arrived at Fort Superior at six where I found
Mr. Archd. McDonald in charge. Mr. Clarke had taken his
departure for Cumberland on the 3rd; here I learnt that the
Athabasca N.W. Light Canoe with Leith & Keith had passed
last night ; it appears they found a passage on the South side
of Buffalo Lake while we were jammed in on the North side

by the Ice. Mr. McDonald informs me that all the disturbance and confusion that has taken place here this Spring arose from Mr. Clarke's violent conduct. Received Letters from Messrs. Heron & Pruden intimating that they have delivered 108 bags of Pemican to Mr. Clarke for the Athabasca Department exclusively, 70 of which that Gentleman has found means to consume, leaving only 38 bags for our Brigades going out and returning to the interior which in all likelihood will be a death blow to our prospects in the North, as it will be utterly impossible to provision our Brigades: Mr. Clarke has failed in every individual arrangement entered into with me, and unless the Govr. in Chief adopts some measure to enforce a perfect understanding and co-operation between Isle ala Crosse & Athabasca, it will be quite impossible to conduct the business of the North. Our people are nearly worn out with hunger & fatigue, indeed myself & the other Gentlemen are in the same state having had little or no sustenance for eleven days, we have therefore devoted the remainder of to day to repose.

7th, Thursday: English River.—When embarking this morning at six O'Clock, several of the people were extremely insolent and refused to ship a small Box, one in particular (Jaudoins) was so mutinous that I found it necessary to plunge into the Water, and drag him ashore for the purpose of compelling him to embark the box; he was backed and encouraged by eleven of his comrades who it will be requisite for the sake of example to punish severely by fine. The weather has been very boisterous throughout the day with much rain. Passed through Isle ala Crosse Lake and encamped at the Foot of the Chaguina Rapids at eight O'Clock.

8th, Friday: Started at two A.M. All our people very unwell in consequence of eating immoderately after their long fast. The weather very unfavourable, blowing hard with Rain; encamped at eight O'Clock entrance of Grassy River.

9th, Saturday: Left our Encampment at 2 A.M., made very little progress against a strong head wind, and encamped at twelve A.M. in Serpent Lake on account of the boisterous state

June
1821

June of the weather; the Rain fell in torrents the remainder of the
1821 day.

[fo. 125] *10th, Sunday: Portage de Orrie.*—The weather moderated at Six A.M. when we embarked, came up with the Coles band of Indians attended by Gunn and two men, they are equiped for the Summer and going inland immediately: our Guide who is the most expert Bowsmen in the country ran the Pin Portage Rapid without putting ashore, this is the place where Mr. Robertson was overturned in the N.W. Canoe, and is considered a very dangerous fall, made a tolerable good days march and encamped at 8 O'Clock.

11th, Monday: Embarked at two A.M., breakfasted at the Petit Diable Portge. where we found a N.W. encampmt. which had been occupied last night. Put up at nine O'Clock below the Discharge of Rapid River.

12th, Tuesday. Started at two A.M., blowing hard; breakfasted at Portge. de L'Isle where our consort got much damaged in running the Rapid; left our Guide to repair it and proceeded until 8 P.M. when we encamped in the Lake of the Woods. Our stock of provisions is again exhausted.

13th, Wednesday: Left our encampment at 3 A.M.; the other Canoe joined us at eleven O'Clock, proceeded until 8 P.M., and encamped on the Carp Portage.

14th, Thursday: Embarked at one A.M. Overtook the Isle ala Crosse Boats in Beaver Lake. Descended Rivierre Maline and landed at the entrance of Cumberland Lake to Gum at ten P.M.

15th, Friday: Proceeded at one O'Clock A.M. and arrived at Cumberland House at five O'Clock where I found Messrs. Swain & McKenzie; the former in charge who received us with much politeness and hospitality, the Isle ala Crosse & Saskatchewan Brigades had started from this place on the 13th. Occupied the remainder of the day in repairing the Canoes.

16th, Saturday: Saskatchewan.—Embarked at two O'Clock A.M. The weather extremely hot and the flies very troublesome. Put up at 8 P.M.

17th, Sunday : Entrance of Grand Rapid.—Started at one O'Clock A.M., spoke some Freemen in the Narrows of Cedar Lake, but they could give me no information relative to the Enemy having only arrived there this morning. Encamped at eight O'Clock it being too dark to run the Rapid. June 1821

18th, Monday : Lake Winnipic.—I fully calculated on meeting the N.W. at the Foot of the Rapid this morning, and therefore made the necessary defensive preparations; left our Encampment at 4 A.M., landed Messrs. Miles & Oxley with two men out of each Canoe, as it was considered dangerous to run the Rapid with the full complement, and in six minutes got to the basin of the Upper Portage, a distance of about two miles: this is considered the finest run in North America, and altho' the swell is heavy it is by no means a dangerous rapid; Re-embarked the Gentlemen and people at the basin, and when we approached the small Island I discovered a Canoe laying in the Water and some N.W. people on the bank, and suspected there was a stratagem in contemplation, Mr. McLeod a N.W. Clerk hailed me by name and intimated that a coalition had taken place between the Coys., and on landing he exhibited *Copies* of Letters from the Houses of Messrs. Maitland Garden & Auldjo and Messrs. McTavish Fraser & Co. of Montreal also from Govr. Williams and several N.W. Wintering Proprietors apprising the Officers of both concerns of the event; Mr. McLeod requested I would address some of the Gentlemen inland officially on the subject and give him four men out of our Canoes to make up the Complement of a Light Canoe, but as he could produce no original documents I declined complying with his demands, suspecting the probability of what is vulgarly called a hoax. The information seems to disconcert both Officers & Men, and I must confess my own disappointment that instead of a junction our Opponents have not been beaten out of the Field, which with one or two years of good management I am certain might have been effected. Encamped at eight O'Clock P.M. [fo. 126]

19th, Tuesday : Norway House.—Embarked at two A.M. and about one P.M., arrived at this place where I was received with much politeness and attention by the Govr. in Chief; he

June favored me with the outline of the arrangements with the N.W.
1821 Co., and as the contest is now terminated I beg to conclude
this apology for a Journal after presenting my most respectful
congratulations to the Honble. Committee on what appears to
me a very advantageous and satisfactory arrangement of the
serious differences which have for a length of time kept the
country in a state of Warfare.

GEO. SIMPSON.

REPORT ON ATHABASCA DISTRICT

BY GEORGE SIMPSON

FORT WEDDERBURN,
ATHABASCA LAKE, 18th May, 1821.

[fo. 1]

TO THE GOVR. DEPTY. GOVR. & COMMITTEE
OF THE HONBLE. HUDSONS BAY COMPY.

HONBLE. SIRS,

Having devoted the whole of my time and attention for several Months past, to the affairs of this department, and thereby acquiring an intimate knowledge thereof, I trust the liberty I am now about to take, in addressing you direct, instead of communicating through the Govr. in Chief, may not be ascribed to a wish of obtruding myself officiously on your notice. With that Gentleman I have corresponded very fully, and shall at meeting lay before him all the information I possess relative to the Business; but the multiplicity of his avocations rendering it probable, that he may not be enabled to enter into the subject so particularly as might be desirable, I shall do myself the honor while on the spot of submitting a few observations for your notice, regarding the Company's affairs in this quarter, which I sincerely hope may be productive of some benefit to the interests thereof.

It appears to me that the affairs of Athabasca, have been hitherto totally neglected or sadly mismanaged, yet it affords me peculiar satisfaction to be enabled to state that generally speaking they begin to assume a more favorable appearance, and if the advantages already gained, and so dearly bought, are followed up with system and regularity and that the necessary support is rendered in Men and Goods, I venture to predict that the Trade of the Department will in the course of Two or Three Years repay the heavy losses already sustained¹ and there-

¹ The Company bore all the losses of 1815-16, 1816-17 and 1817-18, charging nothing to the factors. Athabaska accounts in these years were treated separately, not as a part of the trading accounts of the Northern Department. In 1817-18 the loss in Athabaska was £3,500. Cf. MS. H.B.C. A. 6/19 fo. 100^v-101. Cf. also *infra*, pp. 366, 375, 385, 402-3.

after prove a very lucrative concern. Had the management of the business been in competent hands, and conducted with ordinary discretion, it would long ere now have assumed a very different appearance, and the fatality which seems to have attended it been avoided ; but to mismanagement and the total absence of decision and salutary arrangement, more than the Opposition of the North West Compy. are to be imputed the misfortunes with which it would appear the concern has been haunted.

That association were perhaps never so formidable in this Country or more inclined to have recourse to violent and overbearing measures than this Year, while we on the contrary were at no former period except the year 1817 less able to contend with them, yet by the determined line of conduct, together with the precautionary measures I found it necessary to adopt, the dignity of the Honble. Hudsons Bay Coy., has in no shape been compromised, their interests firmly maintained, and the Trade altho' still attended with loss, more productive than heretofore : in making these observations I do not mean to arrogate to myself any particular merit nor to cast invidious reflections on those Gentlemen who preceded me in charge of the business, who I have no doubt felt much zeal in the interests of their Employers, but for the purpose of pointing out the real cause of our disasters in order that it may be avoided and thereby escape a repetition of those ruinous effects.

[fo. 2]

ATHABASCA LAKE DISTRICT

FORT WEDDERBURN.—This Post from its central situation, is considered the Depot of the Athabasca Department being about equi-distant from the Compys. Establishments at Gt. Slave Lake and Peace River and those projected towards the North Sea and Pacific Ocean ; also on account of its contiguity to the Lands of the Chipewyans who are the most numerous Tribe in this Country. From these circumstances while opposition continues to exist, it is likely to be the principal Seat of War. It is therefore highly necessary that a formidable Establishment should be always kept up at this place, and

that it should be the head quarters of whoever is in charge of the Business, in order that a disposable force of Officers Men and Property, may be at command to repair at a short notice to the support of any of our Establishments, that may stand in need of relief; such assistance may be furnished from hence with greater facility than from any other part of the Country on account of its central situation, contiguity to York Factory and the Navigation admitting the use of Boats: a Year's Stock of Goods in advance should always be on hand for the use of the distant Establishments to meet contingencies or extraordinary demands. It is perfectly capable of maintaining this large Establishment as the Lake abounds with Fish, and Buffalo and Deer are numerous in all directions within a few Days March of the Fort, so that with due precaution there is not the smallest danger of serious inconvenience arising from want of sustenance, but it is to be lamented that these precautionary measures on which not only the safety of the Trade, but the existance of the people depend, have never yet been sufficiently attended to, and the consequence is that the Compy's Servants have undergone very great privations year after year.

The Chipewyans do not consider this part of the Country to be their legitimate Soil; they come in large Bands from their own barren Lands situated to the North of this Lake, extending to the Eastern extremity of Gt. Slave Lake and embracing a large Track of Country towards Churchhill. The Compys. Traders at the latter Establishment, made them acquainted with the use and value of European Commodities and being naturally of a vagrant desposition and those articles becoming necessary to their Comforts, they shook off their indolent habits, became expert Beaver hunters, and now penetrate in search of that valuable animal into the Cree and Beaver Indian hunting Grounds, making a circuit easterly by Carribeau Lake; to the South by Isle a la Crosse; and Westerly to the Banks of Peace River, and so avaricious are they, that the prospect of Gain I have no doubt would lead them much further, did not the more Warlike Tribes to the Southward and Westward intimidate them. The greater proportion of them however remain on their own barren Lands, where they procure

sustenance with little exertion as the Country abounds with Rein Deer, and some years nearly the whole of them retire thither, at times influenced by superstitious feelings, and at others by having laid up what they consider an abundant Stock of European articles (being very provident) in order to indulge in ease and Luxury, as of all the Natives that inhabit North America none are so much devoted to Epicurean habits as the Chipewyans. From these circumstances it is not possible to give an accurate idea of the number that belong to this Post, they rarely however exceed Two hundred Families and are this season reduced to between Fifty and Sixty. While the North West Compy. were in full possession of the Country, the Chipewyans were reduced to the most servile and abject state; absolute [*sic*] despotism was perhaps never carried to such lengths as over these poor creatures, and strange to tell they have not only an innate fear, but attachment to that association: in those Days they were compelled to be industrious, and annually brought large quantities of Furs and Provisions, which were Traded at a trifling comparative expense, but since the Honble. Hudsons Bay Compy. have extended their Trade to this Country, they have shaken off the North West Yoke, and in their turn rule the Land; in short are completely spoiled, have laid aside their industrious habits, and take advantage of the Opposition; so that while it continues, the profits to the contending parties must be very slender.

The System hitherto followed up by the Compys. Servants, has been ruinous not only to the Trade but to the Natives; Packs seemed to be a very secondary consideration, they conceived that they had fully gained the objects of their mission by emancipating the Indians, and took no trouble to impress on them the necessity of continuing their exertions; the Indians have therefore fallen into their original apathy, from which it will take a length of time to arouse them; it has occurred to me however that Philanthropy is not the exclusive object of our visits to these Northern Regions, but that to it are coupled interested motives, and that Beaver is the grand bone of contention; I have therefore taken great pains to convince them of the necessity of resuming their hunts with vigour, and that

they can only be rewarded in proportion to the returns they bring us. It has been the practise to load them with Debts and presents in the Fall; and finding that they were abundantly supplied without the troubles of the Chase, they did not exert themselves: this course I found to be ruinous, and quite foreign to the Wishes of the Committee and have therefore used every argument to re-animate their exertions, and promulgated the same doctrine to the Gentlemen in charge of Districts and Posts, which seems to have the desired effect, as with about one third of the Indians and means we had both last and the preceding year, our returns are materially encreased at this Post. It is absolutely necessary to keep good faith with the Chipewyans, but we have had such a dearth of every article suitable for the Trade, that I have not been able to fulfil my promises made in the Fall, altho' really this Season they deserve encouragement having been very industrious; I do however sincerely trust that we shall be enabled to make amends next Season, otherways our prospects are irrecoverably lost: our opponents altho labouring under the disadvantages of the recollection of their former oppressive measures, loss of char[a]cter, ruined circumstances, enormous expences arising from the prodigious tract of Country through which they must transport their Merchandize, and the animated opposition they have to contend with in all directions, do every thing but Beat us out of the Field; this arises from their perfect knowledge of, and attention to the business; they seem to want for nothing, have at all their Establishments active experienced [fo. 4] officers, stout able bodied Men, good runners and Interpreters and abundance of Goods, all which we are destitute of; from the attention paid to the packing of their Goods alone, each North West canoe brings at least one fourth more cargo than ours do: all these circumstances enable them to oppose us with extraordinary vigour and effect; if they find us inclined to lavish, they necessarily adopt the same plan and being so diffusely established, they can with little inconvenience curtail the supplies of those parts of the Country not settled by us and meet us in a formidable shape wherever we attempt to press them hardest, and when they discover that our means

are limited they make a parade of generosity and juggle the Indians out of Packs originally intended for us. It is quite a mistaken notion that the Chipewyans attach themselves to us on the score of gratitude, that being a virtue to which their minds are impervious, on the contrary, from what I have been able to remark, they have a natural predilection to their original Masters, and those who join us are merely actuated by interested motives, a few cases of revenge on account of private injuries excepted : all their measures are regulated by political views, they know the value of Opposition and dread the termination of it, therefore in order to encourage both parties, knowing that it must very soon cease to exist, if they attached themselves altogether to either side; they settle among themselves who are to join the French and who the English: the head of a numerous Family almost invariably attaches so many to one side and so many to the other, and individuals frequently take credit at each Fort and divide their hunts: therefore the utmost that can be said of this post is, that we have gained a strong footing, and would have divided the Trade or perhaps had the better share of it had we been equally well arranged as our Opponents:—Monopoly by either party is quite out of the question while both are on an equality, and if I am at liberty to judge from present appearances, there is little probability that our Opponents will quit the Field while we make such a contemptable figure. There was really such a falling off in our Means this Season, that I had great difficulty in convincing the Indians that we intend maintaining our ground in the country, and if your Honors are determined to become Masters thereof, very different measures must be adopted to those hitherto acted upon, as we have to contend with a very resolute and powerful confederacy. Our complement of Men and Officers here this Season, is about one third less than it requires to put us on an equality with the North West; we have certainly a few good Men, but the greater proportion are poor miserable wretches, loaded with infirmities, and totally incapable of the arduous duties they have to perform, the consequence is that our harassing and laborious work devolves on the few valuable hands who are become quite

disgusted and only induced to remain by the extravagant Wages paid them. Out of Eight Officers, including a Guide and Interpreter belonging to this post, two only Messrs. Miles and Brown are men in whom I could place any confidence and whose valuable services have been of the utmost importance to me, the others were in every respect a useless burthen upon the Post, not worth their Victuals, some of them North West renegado half breeds, disaffected, and I verily believe still in the pay of their former Employers. The supplies were not to one half the extent necessary and badly selected, and for the preservation of the Trade I have been under the necessity of sending Officers, Men & Dogs at an enormous expense, and most serious inconvenience, to Posts at the distance of one Thousand Miles and upwards, in the course of the Winter for indispensable necessities, while those establishments are furnished with officers men and goods far exceeding their demands; in some cases assistance was altogether refused and in others instead of Goods useful and fitting for the Trade, rubbish were sent being unsaleable in their own Shelves. From these remarks your Honors can form some idea of the situation in which I have been placed and the dangers to which mismanagement and the want of adequate means expose us. [fo. 5]

While Opposition continues I conceive that Fifty packs are about the outside average returns that can be expected from this Post, if even maintained on the desirable footing until the means of our Opponents are weakened by the New Establishments producing a diversion of their forces.

As I formerly remarked, the Indians have this Season been unusually industrious, but an Opponent has started up in Mr. Clarke, the Compys representative at Isle a la Crosse, who by his overwhelming powers and weight of property, has done us more injury than the North West Compy.; he has withdrawn nearly all the valuable hunters to the other side of Portage La Loche by his lavish expenditure and is in every respect a more formidable opponent than our avowed Enemies: My Journal which I imagine will be transmitted to your honors (and to which I must beg reference for the general and particular arrangements of the business) touches frequently on

this Gentleman's conduct, I shall not therefore make any comment thereon at present, further than that if any means can be devised to keep him out of the North West Service, I would strongly recommend his being withdrawn from any prominent charge in this employ: had the affairs of Isle a la Crosse been conducted on a salutary footing this Season, and the feelings of competition, rivalry, and petty jealousy been laid aside by that Gentleman it would have benefited the interests of that District materially, been most important to the Wellfare of this Department generally and Athabasca Lake District would at the lowest calculation have made returns of Fifty Packs valuable Furs.

Provisions altho' abundant in this neighbourhood are procured at an enormous expense and with much labour; White Fish is the main spring of our Existence and Twenty Men at least are required to provide the Fort during the Winter with that article alone; from the scarcity of Dogs this Season about one third more people have been occupied for the purpose of hauling, as the Fisheries are about Twenty Miles distant; with a sufficient number of Dogs however two Fish carriers would be sufficient. Buffalo and Moose Deer are numerous in the Neighbourhood say within Four to Six Days March of the Establishment, but in all we have not had sufficient animal Food to supply the Officers Mess for three Months, owing to [fo. 6] the scarcity of Men and Dogs, with due precaution however, abundance of provisions might be secured, not only for occasional use at the Post, but to provide the Brigade from hence to Portage La Loche on its way out; for this purpose Six Cree hunters should be attached to the Fort being more expert than Chipewyans in hunting the large animals.

Fort Wedderburn is situated on Coal Island nearly at the Western extremity of the Lake, its aspect is Northerly and eclipsed from the Sun about one half the year, by a huge Rock behind the House; the soil thin and sterile, I however intend planting a few sets of Potatoes altho' there is no field for extensive improvement in the way of horticulture. The Buildings are scarcely habitable, it is therefore necessary to erect a Dwelling House this Summer. Fort Chipewyan is situated on the

Mainland opposite, about a Mile and a half distant; it is a magnificent Establishment compared with this, and if there was no other reason for improving the Fort than to give it the appearance of respectability in the eyes of the Indians, material alterations and improvements are necessary on that account, as exterior and show have a wonderful effect on the savage race. The North West guard House is situated to the right about Ten paces from the corner of our Fort and is the rendezvous of an Army of Murderers, Robbers, Bullies and Villains of all descriptions of whom my Journal treats fully.

There are two Outposts attached to Fort Wedderburn, Harrisons House and Berens House.

HARRISONS HOUSE, is situated near the Eastern extremity of the Lake about one hundred and Fifty Miles from hence; the object thereof is to attract the Chipewyans who generally reside on their Lands (usually called Carribeau Eaters) towards the Rich hunting Grounds to the Southward and Westward: they come thither for the purpose of obtaining Ammunition Tobacco and other European articles for which they exchange considerable quantities of Provisions and a few Skins; and by giving them small and frequent supplies they are induced to remain in that neighbourhood where there are a few Beaver and a considerable number of Otters. The North West had an Establishment near this place a few years ago but withdrew it on account of the Murder of some of their people by the Indians in a Drunken brawl; they had no Establishment here when the Companys Servants came into the country, but as the Indians were then in the habit of going to Fort Chipewyan for their supplies, and unacquainted with us, it was considered expedient to establish a Post there in order to intercept them. Mr. Andries formerly a North West Clerk, has hitherto had charge thereof, but being too strongly opposed, has done little more good than annoying our antagonists, compelling them to squander their property and creating a diversion of their forces. This Season however there is no doubt but he would have cleared the Expenses of the Post, had his means been adequate to the absolute wants thereof: Mr. Clarke of Isle a la Crosse was however aware from the limited

quantity of Goods brought into Athabasca, that we could not compete with him, and therefore took a shameful advantage of our difficulties, sent emessaries thither to seduce the Indians by the promises of extravagant largesses, and so effectually succeeded, that he withdrew the greater part of them, who have actually done nothing; the advances made them by Mr. [fo. 7] Andries and the Equipments furnished by Mr. Clarke are therefore irrecoverably lost, and through the sheer spirit of Jealousy and party feeling, the Indians are thus taught to become Rogues & Vagabonds; our people moreover have been reduced to the greatest privations in consequence of this desertion, as Mr. Andries could not procure provisions for their maintenance in the absence of the Indians: his Twine arrived at too late a period in the Season to prepare nets in time to take advantage of the Fall Fishery; he was therefore under the necessity of sending about half his people away, and with extraordinary fortitude remained with a few Men altho nearly exhausted by Famine to maintain the Post, as in the eyes of the Indians it would be considered a disgrace to abandon it while our adversaries kept their ground: they were also reduced to the greatest distress from the same cause, as many of their Hunters likewise migrated to Isle a la Crosse, but were sufficiently fortunate to make a good Fall Fishery having received a supply of Twine early in the Season. While opposition continues in this part of the Country, I conceive it necessary to maintain the Establishment of Harrisons House as it is the Key to Athabasca from the Chipewyan Lands and is advantageously situated for Provisions and Furs. The Buildings consist of a Masters House, Mens House and Store all in tolerable repair and sufficient for the place.

BERENS HOUSE, is situated on the West Bank of the Athabasca River about three Days March from hence, the surrounding Country abounds with Buffalo & Deer, Beaver and other Animals valuable for their Furs are also numerous in its vicinity. Some years ago it was numerously inhabited by Crees, but the Small Pox, Measles and other contagious diseases have made ravages among them nearly tantament to extermination; the aborigines are therefore reduced to not more than

Twenty to Thirty Families and devote their attention almost exclusively to Buffalo and Deer hunting. The North West usually had an Establishment at this place chiefly for the purpose of securing provisions for their canoes going to and from the Interior; the Honble. Compys Servants also settled it on that account, but principally intended for Watching the Indians as they passed by that track in the course of their Winter hunts, receiving their Furs and supplying their immediate wants; Mr. McAulay had charge of this post last year, but was under the necessity of abandoning it on account of Starvation (for particulars and the humiliating terms exacted by our Opponents see Journal pages 21, 114 [M.S.]) at that time we had about one half the Indians, who finding that we deserted the Post and conceiving that we should not return thither on account of the repetition of our disasters, migrated to Lesser Slave Lake rather than put themselves again under the North West Yoke. Knowing the importance of having a permanent establishment at this place, altho our means were very inadequate, I determined on sending an Officer with a few Men and Goods to winter there merely for the purpose of regaining the confidence of the few Indians who remained, in which we have effectually succeeded also secured a few provisions and Furs which might have been materially increased, [fo. 8] had we the means of establishing it on a respectable footing. Next Season I trust to make this a valuable Post and by proper management I think it will furnish abundance of provisions for our Brigades passing, and its returns in Furs will nearly clear its expenses: the Indians are desirous that the post should be removed about Thirty Miles higher up the River in which I mean to indulge them.

The District generally speaking abounds with Game, which have encreased to an extraordinary degree within these few years being undisturbed by the Indians who have been furnished with supplies even beyond their demands without the trouble of calling forth their exertions: When the North West held their despotic sway, it produced on an average One hundred and Twenty packs valuable Furs, chiefly Beaver annually, but since the competition has existed it is much

reduced, the total number taken out last year not exceeding Thirty Packs from both Establishments. While there are two parties I am of opinion that the returns will not even with the best management exceed the former average returns but if a coalition took place (which according to North West report is beyond a doubt) or that either party abandoned the Field, the returns would for several years to come, if the Indians resume their industrious habits be very considerable, as the country is now according to Indian report as Rich as it has been at any time within their recollection, so that there is still an ample harvest in Store for those who weather the Storm of Opposition.

The Lake affords abundant means of sustenance throughout the year both at Fort Wedderburn and Harrisons House, if the necessary precautions are taken, for this purpose it is necessary that Twelve Orkney Fishermen should be kept at the former place and two at the latter, with an abundant stock of Twine; hitherto we have had Canadians principally, who are not such expert Fishermen, and very improvident, and we have never yet had one half the Stock of Twine that is required. At Berens House the people live chiefly on animal Food as there is no certain or permanent Fishery in that neighbourhood, an Orkney Fisherman and a few Nets should however be kept there as the River at times affords a limited supply. Buffalo and Deer are so numerous throughout the District, that with due attention the people may occasionally be indulged with a Meal of animal food, and abundance of provisions collected for the canoes passing in the Spring and Fall between this place and Portage La Loche and for Voyaging in the course of the Winter.

The Soil does not admit of extensive cultivation either at Fort Wedderburn or Harrisons House, but with attention Potatoes and other hardy Vegetables might be raised for the Officers Table. At Berens House the Soil is fertile, Grain and Potatoes might be raised in considerable quantity, and if we can obtain Seed I intend having a Garden made there without delay. The North West pay little or no attention to horticulture in this District.

The District has suffered materially hitherto through not having a sufficient number of experienced Officers and Men, and to put it on a respectable footing, it requires the following complement, vizt.: one experienced District Master, three experienced Clerks fit to take charge of Posts, Four stout active young Men who can read and write (denominated Clerks but whose business is to run after Indians, take charge of Voyaging parties &c) Five Interpreters and Runners English half breeds (as they are attached and trust worthy, whereas the Canadian half breeds are thoughtless, dissipated, and depraved in every sense of the word, secretly attached to their former employers the N.W. Coy. and in whom the smallest confidence cannot be placed) Two Guides and Eighty Four Men to be appropriated as follows vizt.:

FORT WEDDERBURN

- 1 Experienced District Master
- 1 Clerk confidential
- 2 do for Voyaging &c.
- 3 Interpreters
- 1 Guide
- 12 Orkney Fishermen
- 1 Canadian Blacksmith
- 14 European Servants
- 33 Canadian Voyageurs

68 people Fort Wedderburn.

HARRISONS HOUSE

- 1 Experienced Clerk in charge
- 1 Clerk for Voyaging &c.
- 1 Interpreter
- 2 Orkney Fishermen
- 2 European Servants
- 8 Canadian Voyageurs

15 people Harrisons House.

BERENS HOUSE

- 1 Experienced Clerk in charge
- 1 Clerk for Voyaging &c.
- 1 Interpreter
- 1 Guide
- 1 Orkney Fisherman
- 2 European Servants
- 8 Canadian Voyageurs

15 people Berens House.

In all Ninety Eight people, our numerical force will even then be inferior to our opponents, they have a host of Murderers, Robbers, Bullies and miscreants of all descriptions, our cause is however strong enough without the assistance of such infamous characters and the Officers and European Servants are sufficient to keep them at bay.

The returns of this District last year 1819/20 with all its advantages amounted to £1165 ,, 14 ,, 3; this year 1820/21 altho' the prices of Furs are materially lower it amounts to £1892 ,, 6 ,, 7 being an encrease of £726 ,, 12 ,, 4. The total Expenditure last year amounted to £7623 ,, 15 ,, 0; this year to £6569 ,, 5 ,, 1 being a reduction on the Expenditure of £1054 ,, 9 ,, 11 altho' the Wages are materially advanced and an encrease of £1781 ,, 2 ,, 3 on the returns. As an instance of the shameful extravagance of last year out of Twenty Four Kegs Rum consumed in the District £135 was the amount sold to Servants and this year out of Twelve Kegs consumed £159 is the amount sold. Many such examples of wasteful extravagance could be adduced but it is unnecessary to analyse the system as generally speaking it was one continued scene of prodigal irregularity, and from the course pursued by the great Men of the North, one would be led to suppose that they came hither solely for the purpose of maintaining their own dignity, filling their pockets and emptying those of their Employers.

The important services of Mr. McDonald who had charge of this District last year are not unworthy of remark, from part

of Mr. Robertsons Official Correspondence with that Gentleman, one would conceive him to be a *rara avis*, possessing abilities more fit to govern an Empire than an Athabasca trading Post, but if he did possess those luminous talents, he must have kept them entirely to himself, one thing is clear, that the Honble. Compy. reaped little advantage from them. This phenomenon at a Saly. of £265 p annum last Year never took the trouble of putting Pen to Paper, looking after his people, or into the state of officers of the District, speaking to an Indian, keeping either Books or accounts or even crossing the threshold of his chamber (except to answer the calls of Nature) but actually passed the whole of his time inland Eight Months in eating and Drinking the Compys property, smoking their Tobacco, and Sleeping their time away: if the responsible Man thus deports himself it is but natural that his officers and Men should follow his example; the result may be anticipated, the business got deranged and was left in a chaos of confusion. I am not an advocate for radical reform in the general acceptation of the term but found it absolutely necessary to adopt it in the arrangement of the Athabasca officers generally and those of Fort Wedderburn in particular, and if followed up, I think the innovation may be productive of some good, but if allowed to relapse into its former state our subtile competitors will certainly put their threats of 'kicking us out of the country' into effect.

GREAT SLAVE LAKE.—This District has been peculiarly [fo. 10] unfortunate since established by the Honble. H.B. Coy. and I cannot say that even a footing was gained in it until last year. Within a few Weeks of its being established in the year 1815/16 the officer in charge was compelled to abandon the Post to the N.W. Coy. in consequence of Starvation, and entered into an arrangement not to Trade with the Natives in the course of that Winter; this misfortune arose from an ignorance of the Country and its resources, entering it at too late a period in the Season, unprovided with Fishermen, Nets or Hunters and being unable to contend with our Opponents who had about double the number of Officers and Men and a superabundance of Goods. Our Misfortunes the first year impressed

the Natives with a doubt of our stability, they were completely under the North West Yoke, and seeing that our means did not enable us to protect them, they would not venture to give offence to their Tyrants, having just cause to dread the consequences of their resentment; this did not however satisfy the worthy Magistrate Archd. Norman McLeod who administered the N.W. Government of Athabasca; he by virtue and in the most corrupt perversion of his judicial functions issued Warrants for the apprehension of all the Honble. Compys. Servants and confiscated to the use of the Banditte he represented both public and private property belonging to the Compy. and their Servants; thus were our prospects blasted in the memorable campaign of 1816/17. In 1817/18 no attempt was made to establish the District. An other effort was made in 1818/19 to settle this part of the Country but the means were so inadequate, that not an Indian would venture to join us, they looked upon the cause as a forlorn hope and all efforts at withdrawing any portion of them were fruitless. Last year however being better prepared than heretofore, a slight impression was made, the Officer in charge (Mr. McVicar) by wonderful exertion removed the Spell, and towards the close of the Season attached a considerable proportion of the Indians to our interest; it had not the desired effect to the full extent, as not more than Seven small packs of Furs were made by him, but it inspired the Natives with sentiments of freedom and deprived our Opponents not only of their property, which they were compelled to squander, but of their Revenue, as their

[fo. 11] returns decreased from about Fifty packs, the average returns of the former seven years to Nineteen small Packs. The Gentleman before mentioned used every possible exertion to follow up the Blow in the course of the Summer, and would have succeeded had his means been in any way commensurate to his wants, but unfortunately he had neither Men nor Goods to carry his measures into effect, and considering the difficulties under which he laboured, he has done wonders in keeping himself and people in existence and a complication of misfortunes has prevented his making the handsome returns he calculated on. By Mr. Robertson's correspondence and verbal

communications, he had reason to suppose that the District would in the course of last Summer and in the Fall, be established on a Grand Scale, he in consequence set every engine at work to alienate the North West Indians and attract those belonging to Hays River, Montagne Island and the Carribeau Lands¹: towards the Fall they congregated to his post, brought him considerable quantities of Provisions which they delivered on credit; he had not a particle of ammunition nor a Pipe of Tobacco to give them except what he prevailed on the North West Clerks and Servants to purloin out of the Stores of their Employers and buoyed the Natives up with the hopes of the Daily arrival of a formidable Brigade richly laden; at length Five N.W. Canoes made their appearance manned by 30 gay stout Canadian Voyageurs, laden with 140 pieces of Merchandize each weighing 90 lbs.; this formidable Party disconcerted the Indians very much, Mr. McVicar's entreaties however prevailed on them to wait patiently until the arrival of our long expected and much talked of Squadron, which at the close of the Season arrived, but his disappointment and that of the Indians may be easily conceived when this magnificent Brigade dwindled away to three Wrecks of Canoes, manned by 12 half starved, ragged miserable wretches and laden with 40 pieces Merchandize weighing on an average 60 lbs each. The Indians actually thought he made Fools of them intentionally and on the impulse of the moment were about to lay violent hands upon him, but being much respected by them, they went no greater lengths than to upbraid him with deceit, treat him with every mark of contempt and remove in a body to the North West establishment: among them however was a chief the 'Bute' to whom he had for some years paid much attention and who had a very strong attachment towards him; this man remained staunch, collected his followers and declared that he would at all risks stand by his Father (McVicar) through his influence he retained and Equiped about 25 hunters who divided themselves into several Bands, the 'Bute' headed the principal party, the finest band about the Lake, and

¹ The region west of Hudson's Bay and north of Great Slave Lake also known as 'The Barren Grounds'.

went attended by three Men to his Wintering Grounds a very distant and rich part of the Country, where they found great numbers of Beaver and set to work with a determination of making extraordinary hunts, but the Chief was very soon attacked by a Bleeding at the Nose by over exertion which terminated fatally. The Band having lost their Leader abandoned themselves to despair, and in the extravagance of their Sorrow destroyed Beaver Skins, Clothes, Blankets in short every thing belonging to them, returned to the Fort in the most deplorable state of wretchedness and discontinued their hunts for the season. About the same time an other principal Indian the 'White Fish' who headed a Band lost his Son, they also sacrificed every article of Trade and Clothing and likewise returned to the Fort, having relinquished all idea of further exertion.

[fo. 12] The Canoes arrived at too late a period in the Season to make the necessary preparations for the Fall Fishery, which was over before they had a Net in readiness to put into the Water; on this Fishery they entirely depend for existence during the Winter, but its failure brought the horrible prospects of Famine to their view; the Fort hunters were for a length of time unsuccessful, Mr. McVicar had therefore but the choice of two courses to pursue in order to escape certain Death, either to give himself people and property up to the North West Compy. or recal his Fur hunters; in this dilemma he collected several Indians to provide for the Fort who laid in a good stock of provisions but in a great measure sacrificed the Trade. Considering the variety of difficulties to which this place has been exposed I conceive Mr. McVicar has done more than could have been expected and his activity zeal and judicious conduct merits particular commendation.

The Indians belonging to this District may be divided into three Classes, Mountaineers, Carribeau Eaters & Yellow Knives, in all, about One hundred and Fifty Families, altho' properly speaking they are all of the Chipewyan Tribe, their language, manners and customs being alike; the Mountaineers are those who have been in the habit for many years past of Trading with the North West principal Establishments, are chiefly Fur hunters, and previous to the

opposition were tolerably industrious. The Carribeau Eaters are those who confine themselves to their own barren lands and so called from the circumstance of their devoting the whole of their attention to hunting the Carribeau or Rein Deer, which are very numerous; and the Yellow Knives deriving their name from the Yellow Knife River at the N.E. extremity of the Lake in the vicinity of which they reside. The Mountainees usually termed 'home guards' devote their attention exclusively to Fur hunting except when in search of immediate sustenance, they may be computed at about Eighty Families: while under the sovereign control of the N.W. Coy., they were timid, simple and tractable, but of late they have imbibed notions of Freedom of which they are very tenacious, and treat both parties now with equal indifference, neglect their hunts, and have a strong propensity to every vice they have become acquainted with: they like the Athabasca Lake Indians know the full value of opposition and profit thereby; a judiciously applied and well timed system of Economy would however bring them round to their former habits of industry, altho it will be a very tedious work to break them of those of intemperance. The Carribeau Eaters and Yellow Knives chiefly frequent the N.W. Establishment at Montagne Island where they exchange provisions and the few Furs they collect, for Ammunition, Rum, Tobacco and other articles of European Manufacture; they rarely and in small bands visit the principal Establishment as they get their supplies without the trouble of going that length: with them we have as yet little acquaintance. The Post at Montagne Island is the provision Depot of McKenzies River and on an average produces from Eight to Twelve pack Furs, altho' last Season the returns fell considerably short of that quantity; provisions however is the main object, which they obtain on moderate terms in great abundance so that they seldom feel the miseries of Famine.

The valuable Fur bearing animals are not numerous in this District, they have however increased within the last few Years as the Indians have in a great degree neglected their hunts and permitted them to generate undisturbed; they

consist principally of Beaver and Martins, the latter are very numerous even in the vicinity of the Establishment but the former are rarely to be found within a considerable distance.

[fo. 13] The large Animals Buffalo and Deer are also scarce in the neighbourhood of the Fort so that little dependence can be placed on them for maintenance.

We suffer great loss and inconvenience at this place, from not having our supplies at an earlier period in the Fall, rarely before the middle of Octr., the consequence is that the Indians do not get to their hunting grounds which are at a great distance until the winter is considerably advanced, whereas if the Canoes did arrive a Month earlier, which by proper management I think is practicable, the Indians could lay up a sufficient Stock of provisions before the Winter set in, and afterwards devote their time exclusively to Fur hunting; but when they have both duties to perform, it frequently happens that they are compelled to devote the whole of their attention to the support of themselves and Families, make few or no Furs and in the spring are unable to liquidate any part of their Debts. As I formerly remarked the establishment in a great measure depends for sustenance on the Lake, which supplies an abundant stock of Fish for the Winter consumption if nets were in readiness to take advantage of the Fall Fishery, but hitherto they have been reduced to the most deplorable state through Starvation, as the Twine arrives at too late a period to avail themselves of the Fall Fishery. Here as at every other Fish Post in the North there should be a Stock of Twine on hand for one year in advance, it is by that means alone that the North West Compy. are always so well provided while their neighbours of the Honble. Hudsons Bay Compy. have the most horrible prospects before them throughout the Winter, and until the same plan is adopted by us, the lives of the people and the safety of the Trade will be every successive Winter exposed to the most eminent danger.

I did intend establishing Montagne Island last Season, but on examining the means at my disposal it was found impracticable, having neither Officers Men or Goods for that purpose

not even sufficient to maintain the Posts already established on any thing like a respectable footing: it is however absolutely necessary to settle it this Fall in the event of McKenzies River being established for the purpose of laying up a Stock of Provisions for the use of the District; without this precautionary measure I apprehend it would be unsafe to attempt that enterprise, as a total failure would in all probability be the consequence, a loss of too serious a nature to risk, as it would not only be playing with the lives of the people and wasting the Companys property, but injure us most seriously in the eyes of the Indians; first impressions are lasting, and if the Indians were by any circumstance led to form an unfavorable or doubtful opinion of us, it would be a very difficult matter to remove it.

The North West Compy. have never made any attempt at agriculture in this District, and they are so perfectly aware of the advantages thereof, that if there was any probability of its repaying the trouble and Expense they would not have neglected it. The Soil is Sterile and the Climate unfavourable; in the immediate vicinity of the Lake, the Shrubs are of stunted Growth, and the Native Fruits and plants seldom come to maturity it cannot therefore be expected that Exotics would thrive.

From all I have been able to collect I do not believe that the affairs of this District have sustained any material injury from internal mismanagement, on the contrary I am of opinion that the Officers have discharged their duties faithfully, honorably & zealously, but to the want of salutary arrangement and adequate means in the first instance and the subsequent neglect of its interests are to be ascribed its ill success: an expensive system was necessarily introduced at the commencement of the business, but Economy has been carefully studied this Season, and while opposition continues I do not think that we can attempt to curtail the expenses; the inadequacy of our means has however been productive of most serious injury, and the Indians still look upon us as contemptible when compared with the North West Compy., and as at Fort Wedderburn, unless great improvements are made in the arrangement of affairs [fo. 14]

at the lower Establishments and a sufficient quantity of Goods properly assorted and selected for the Trade with abundance of Men and Officers, I am decidedly of opinion that we shall lose the footing which has been acquired with so much vexation trouble and expense. Promises and hopes of additional strength, have for a length of time been held out to the Indians and they have been so repeatedly amused with excuses and equivocations, that they now begin to doubt not only our stability but veracity, and if we do not next Season advance conclusive evidence that we are the powerful body, we have for such a length of time represented ourselves to be, they will lose all confidence in us; our Opponents are sufficiently industrious in reminding them of the failure of our former assurances, and they now begin to view us with distrust; they are impressed with the idea that we cannot maintain our ground in opposition to such a powerful confederacy, and until they see us on something like an equality with our neighbours, they will not openly use the freedom of their own will, having already felt the Weight of the North West scourge, and the very idea of a second application thereof terrifies them. In order to put this District on any thing like a footing with the North West Coy. and give us the chance of a respectable share of the Trade, it is necessary to have the following complement of Officers and Men vizt.:

FORT RESOLUTION

- I Experienced District Master
- I Clerk Confidential
- I Clerk for Voyaging &c
- I Interpreter
- I Guide
- I Canadian Blacksmith
- 2 Orkney Fishermen
- 20 Canadian Voyageurs
-
- 28 people Fort Resolution.
-

MONTAGNE ISLAND (OUTPOST)

- 1 Experienced Clerk in charge
- 1 Clerk for Voyaging &c
- 1 Interpreter
- 2 Orkney Fishermen
- 5 Canadian Voyageurs

10 people Montagne Island.

In all Thirty Eight people, with this force and the necessary quantity of Goods we are certain of at least one half the Trade.

While opposition continues little profit can be expected from this District, it is however necessary to keep up the chain of communication throughout the Country and the establishment of Gt. Slave Lake is absolutely required, as the Key to McKenzies River, a very Rich and valuable tract of Country.

The Gross Expences of this District last Season amounted to £2122 ,, 10 ,, 0, the returns to £536 ,, 9 ,, 7 leaving a deficiency of £1586 ,, 0 ,, 5. This Season I have great pleasure in showing notwithstanding all our misfortunes and difficulties that the Trade altho' still attended with loss is in a gradual [fo. 15] state of amendment the Gross Expences amounting to £1831 ,, - ,, -; the returns to £427 ,, 11 ,, 6 leaving a deficiency of £1403 ,, 8 ,, 6 which is a reduction on the loss of last year 1819/20 of £183 ,, 11 ,, 6. We have moreover got so firmly established that nothing but the want of means and mismanagement can affect us and no doubt remains but we shall have a moiety of whatever the District produces next year if competent means are afforded and the business conducted with judgement.

Our intercourse here ceases with the Chipewyans, as to the Southward & Westward of Athabasca Lake District we fall in with the Beaver Indians, and to the Northward of Gt. Slave Lake with the Slave, Dog Rib and other Tribes; I shall therefore before parting with these worthies make a few remarks as to the Chipewyan character from my own observation, but regret to say I cannot point out a solitary good trait: they were

originally indolent and simple, those however of them who have had intercourse for any length of time with European Traders and from their insatiable rapacity become good and industrious hunters, but have now reverted to their wonted lethargy, being spoiled by opposition; all their dealings are tainted with a degree of low Cunning which one would think it difficult for an uncultivated savage to acquire; they are covetous to an extreme, false and cowardly; Treacherous and revengeful but have not the spirit to exhibit it openly, and are solely prevented from committing the most atrocious crimes by a fear of the consequences in the event of discovery: the whole Tribe does not possess one particle of honor and to the feelings of gratitude they are total Strangers; in short I conceive the Chipewyan character disgraceful to human nature, and I am satisfied they are loaded with the imprecations of all who have had any intercourse or communication with them: such Wretches are only fit to inhabit the inhospitable clime they live in and no one who has had an opportunity of knowing them will commiserate their situation; had they the most remote sense of gratitude, they could not do otherways than idolize their protectors, and bliss the Day that the Honble. Hudsons Bay Compy. entered among them, but to that virtue their hearts are inaccessible and if the Country did not still abound with valuable Furs it would not be dealing too harshly to leave them to their fate under the yoke of their ruthless Tyrants the N.W. Coy. and their own half breed progeny who have actually drenched the Land with their blood, whole bands of them having been at different times massacred by the savage relatives of that association.

PEACE RIVER.—This District under a proper system and judicious management would in a very short time defray all its expences, and yield handsome returns, but until this year I cannot say that the business has been studied or conducted with any degree of attention: in the year 1818/19, Mr. Clarke established two Posts ¹ under the most auspicious prospects; the District was furnished with every requisite, indeed no Brigade ever entered the North better equipped in every point of view, it consisted of Nine well manned Canoes, laden

¹ I.e. St. Mary's and Colville House.

with every article necessary for the Trade, he was well supported by active experienced Officers, and his imposing force gave the Natives a very favorable opinion of their visitors; he got to his Winter quarters in good time, and was immediately joined by nearly the whole Indians of the District; his opponents on the contrary were but very indifferently equipped, got into the Country much later than usual and their Brigade was stopped by the Ice near Vermillion; this would have been a Death blow to their expectations for that year, had Mr. Clarke availed himself of his advantages, but instead of getting his Indians away to their hunting Grounds properly escorted, an unaccountable supineness characterised all his proceedings; the Indians were permitted to carouse for a length of time about the house, goods were lavished upon them with extraordinary liberality, and by the time the North West Compy. had got their goods hauled upon the Ice, his Stores were literally empty; his opponents with that good management for which they are proverbial took the advantage of his want of activity, invited the Indians to Dunvegen & Vermillion, gave them fresh supplies, sent them to their hunts and got a great proportion of the returns; Mr. Clarke did however succeed in making a favorable impression on the Minds of the Natives and brought out about 1200 lbs of Made Beaver, but had common prudence and foresight been exercised the returns would have been very handsome. Mr. Robertson took the management of affairs in the year 1819/20 and arrived at Fort Wedderburn in due time to make the necessary arrangements for the Department; matters however were not so comfortable there as he could wish, he had private quarrels or misunderstandings with nearly the whole of his Officers, he was anxious to finish his toilsome Journey and dreaded the personal inconvenience and trouble of superintending the allotment of the Men & Goods, or giving the necessary directions to those about him, and leaving the grand and important affairs of the Department to their fate, took his departure for St. Marys; the sequel may be readily conceived, he did not take the precaution of delegating his authority to any of the Gentlemen on the spot, District Masters, Clerks, Guides and Interpreters were alike

[fo. 16]

all had access to the Stores; a general scramble ensued for Goods & Luxuries, some had superabundance, others had next to nothing; in short there never was such a disgraceful mass of confusion, and up to this Date I do not believe that any accurate statement has been made of the supplies taken by each Post: Peace River District of which Mr. Robertson took charge was the greatest sufferer, the Outfit being very insufficient, yet with the assistance of good Officers and Men he improved the Trade having brought out about 1500 lbs of Made Beaver; we fell off however considerably in the estimation of the Indians, with whom well stocked stores is the only criterion of respectability and consequence: in Spring the Natives entertained strong doubts of our revisiting them and the Officers and Men who had suffered great privations during the Winter evinced a strong desire of not returning thither.

Fortunately for the Compys. interests in Athabasca generally, but Peace River in particular (as it would have been his head quarters) Mr. Robertson did not return to the Country last Fall and the charge of the District devolved on Mr. Finlayson, a Gentleman lately attached to the Winnipig Department,¹ who I have great pleasure in saying has notwithstanding the many difficulties he had to contend with, discharged the duties of his situation much to my satisfaction and greatly ameliorated the affairs of the District. The Athabasca Outfit of Men & Goods as I formerly remarked was this year very insufficient, I however saw the necessity of stretching a point in order to regain the confidence of the Beaver Indians and Free Iroquois, about Peace River and the Rocky Mountain and therefore pinched the other Districts, in order to give Mr. Finlayson an opportunity of retrieving our influence and for this purpose [fo. 17] gave him rather more than his proportion of Men and Goods, which has certainly been turned to good account; he succeeded in making a considerable reduction in the Expenditure, p[r]evailed on the Indians to exert themselves, established a

¹ By 'Winnipeg Department' Simpson means the Red River Department, in which Finlayson had been stationed, 1818-20, and which in 1820-21 included the posts at Beaver Creek, Brandon House, Pembina and the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

new post, in short acted fully up to his instructions and the returns of the District are considerably encreased.

Fort St. Marys is pleasantly situated near the confluence of the Smoky River with Peace River, the surrounding Country is rich and Fertile to a considerable extent and easy of Cultivation; the adjacent Woods and plains abound with Buffalo and Deer, and valuable Furred Animals are numerous, so that it is equally well adapted for the residence of the civilized as the savage. With little trouble extensive Gardens may be formed, and abundant Crops of Grain, Potatoes and other Vegetables raised and its contiguity to the Buffalo hunting Grounds renders it the most desirable abode in this part of the Country:—I however regret to say that the Companys Servants have not hitherto sufficiently availed themselves of its natural advantages; Cultivation has in a great measure been neglected, and the Gardens do not yet produce sufficient to afford occasional assistance to the Officer's Mess, whereas by a little attention they might be made to yield sufficient to lighten the consumption of animal Food materially, and guard against the dangers of Starvation; I have however strongly impressed this subject on Mr. Finlayson's attention, and I sincerely trust that every exertion will be used at all the Posts in Peace River (as they possess the same advantage) to bring their Gardens to such perfection as will enable them to contribute very materially to the maintenance of the establishments, and assist Fort Wedderburn in cases of emergency: The N.W. Coy. (who evince great ability in all their plans and arrangements and avail themselves of every advantage the Country affords) derive great benefit from this source, at Dunvegan, Vermillion & Fort de Pinnette they have very extensive Gardens, which are of the most essential importance to them; last Fall it was particularly exemplified, when the Peace River Brigade arrived at Fort Chipewyan, they had no provisions for the remainder of the Voyage, and waited the arrival of a Canoe load of Potatoes from Vermillion which maintained the people until they arrived at their destinations; I see no reason why we should not in like manner provide against contingencies, particularly when it can be done with very little

inconvenience and at a moderate expense, and I trust that in one or two years hence, we shall not only in this but in every thing else connected with the Trade be on a footing with them.

Some few years ago Buffalo were very numerous in the vicinity of the Establishment, but are every successive year retiring to a greater distance, being continually hunted and are now rarely to be found within Six and Eight Days March of the Fort; hitherto Men & Dogs have been employed to haul provisions this great distance, and as they are frequently absent on Meat Trips from Ten to Fifteen Days, the greater part is consumed on the Journey, and the people whose existence depends on this source are frequently reduced to very great privations. Had we a sufficient number of Horses, there would not be the smallest danger of Starvation, and the number of people might be materially curtailed, as two or three Men could with the assistance of these useful animals supply the post abundantly, whereas at present about Fifteen are constant-

[fo. 18] ly employed for that purpose: Forage may be had in any quantity and by rearing a considerable Stock of Horses they might be used for maintenance in cases of particular emergency. The North West Coy. have at their principal post Dunvegan (about 3 Days March S.W. of St. Marys) from One hundred to One hundred and Fifty Horses which are of the most important service to them, and thereby rarely know what a scarcity of provisions is; next Season I expect we shall also have a sufficient number as I have requested Mr. Heron at Edmonton to procure for the District Ten entire Horses and Twenty breeding Mares, the first is the only expense (not exceeding £30) and the advantages are inestimable. Hitherto little attention has been paid to Fishing at this Post, I am however satisfied that if any exertion was used, it could not fail of success, as the Country is intersected with Rivers & Lakes, and the Waters throughout this Country are ascertained to be very productive; I should therefore recommend that two Fishermen and a Stock of Twine be provided and if we are not so fortunate as to discover a good Fishery their Services will be useful for other purposes.

There are a number of Free Canadians and Iroquois in this

neighbourhood, discharged Servants of the North West Company (indeed the greater part of the Iroquois Servants of both Compys. are free during the Winter) these Men and their Meitiff¹ progeny are generally more expert in hunting the Buffalo and Deer than the Natives and make considerable quantities of Provisions and Furs; their Standard prices are materially higher than the Natives, but notwithstanding a lucrative Trade, which has hitherto been monopolized by the North West Compy. we have however drawn a few of them over this Season, who gave us a very seasonable supply of Provisions, also a few Skins, and were it not for the assistance afforded by them, it is not unlikely but we should have been compelled to abandon the Post; if we had the means of supplying the wants of these people, and that they were treated with a little attention, there is no doubt but we should in a very short time come in for a great proportion of their Trade; they like the Indians have been tyrannized over by the North West Compy., and would gladly shake off the yoke, if we could but convince them that we are determined to keep our ground, but the wretched figure we make, compared with our Opponents, induces them to believe that our cause is desperate, that we must soon be compelled to abandon the District, and that they will then be at the Mercy of their former Oppressors; so that as yet our intercourse with these people has been very limited.

The number of Indians that Trade with both concerns at this post and at Dunvegan may be computed at Fifty Fur Hunters; last year we equipped nearly the whole, but they soon discovered that our Stores were empty and in Spring the greater part of them joined the North West Compy. to whom they delivered their hunts. This year we equipped 35 Indians and Mr. Finlayson took much pains to convince them that they could in no way study their own interests so effectually as by following their hunts with industry and application during the Winter, which has had the desired effect, and the Post considering all circumstances has made very tolerable returns 1500 of Made Beaver and a considerable quantity of provisions for the use of the Brigade out, and the New Caledonia

¹[Sic]; usually written *Metis*; the offspring of North American Indian women and white men.

[fo. 19] Expedition. Dunvegan was until this Season the nearest opposition Post to St. Marys, but in the early part of the Winter they settled a small outpost or Guard House under the charge of a Clerk within a short distance of our Fort, which did not however interfere much with our concerns. A great deal of unnecessary labour and expense has been incurred through not selecting an eligible spot for the site of the Fort in the first instance, and the materials were for the third and I hope last time transported to a desirable spot; the Buildings will consist of a Masters House, Men's House and Store and it is expected they will be completed towards the middle of Summer.

There are Twenty One Men attached to the Post this Season, besides Iroquois, and the complement would have been sufficient had they been fit, for the arduous duties required of them, but out of that number there are not half a Doz effective men, the rest were actually a burthen on the place and nearly totally useless; this is a general complaint throughout the Department, and the consequences are most serious: from their appearance compared with the North West people, one would suppose that the Compys. Agents at Montreal had made a selection of the blind, the Lamé, and the superannuated, and being useless members of Society at home, were out of charity sent to the Indian Country, under the impression that a change of Climate might improve their constitutions; the generality of them are really such wretched creatures, that the Indians can scarcely believe, they are the genuine race of Canadian Voyageurs, indeed the striking contrast between them and the Servants of our Opponents, would lead one to suppose that want of phisical strength, and infirmity were essential requisites in the Compys. Servants.

The valuable Furred animals are more numerous this Season, than they have been known for many years, they consist chiefly in the neighbourhood of St. Marys of Beaver, Foxes and Bears, indeed the Country may be pronounced Rich, which is accounted for by the little attention paid by the Indians to their hunts for the last three years; they were certainly more diligent this Season than they have been in our time and by proper management I think they would soon be brought to habits of Industry.

COLVILE HOUSE is situated near the junction of Loon River with Peace River about Ten Days March to the N.E. of St. Marys and distant about three Days March from the N.W. post Vermillion; the soil Fertile, and excellent Gardens might be formed at a trifling expense; no attention has yet been paid to this useful pursuit but in the course of a year or two I expect the post will reap very considerable advantage from the orders issued on that head this Season. Buffalo and Moose are very numerous in the vicinity but on account of the scarcity of Men and Dogs the means of subsistence were both scanty and precarious; indeed the trifling allowance of Flour which the Officers had for private use was in a great measure the Salvation of the Post. No Fishery has hitherto been established by us at this place, which has been a great oversight; there are two small Lakes in its vicinity where the North West have been in the habit of taking considerable numbers, and if Fishermen and Twine can be provided next Season, I think all danger of Starvation will cease, and we may calculate on laying up a considerable quantity of provisions, for Voyaging during the Winter and for the maintenance of the Brigades passing to and from the Depot.

[fo. 20]

The Beaver Indians that frequent both establishments do not exceed thirty Hunters, of which we equipped thirteen last Fall, and on the whole I have no reason to complain of their indolence compared with former years; indeed from all I have been able to collect no doubt remains, that the Beaver Indians would in a very short time by judicious treatment and pains being taken to convince them that industry alone could ameliorate their situation, shake off their indolent habits.

Beaver and the other valuable Fur bearing animals have become numerous in this neighbourhood of late years from the same cause as throughout the country in general where the heat of opposition has existed.

The Trade of this post I have great pleasure in saying is gradually improving, year 1818/19 it produced 140 lbs made Beaver, last year 420 lbs and this year 640 lbs and I do expect a considerable encrease next year if the necessary means are provided.

The Buildings consist of a small sized Dwelling House for the Officers, a Mens House and Store all in good repair.

Altho' the number of Men and quantity of goods, fell considerably short of our demands this year, I conceived it very important to the Companys interests to extend the Trade of this District, and to effect this measure I curtailed the outfits of all the other Posts in the Department for the purpose of establishing one near the Foot of the Rocky Mountain, in order to facilitate our intercourse with the Free Iroquois and Natives of New Caledonia, as also to procure a share of the Trade of that place, which has hitherto been monopolized by the North West Compy. Mr. Yale a very deserving Young Man was accordingly sent thither with an Interpreter last Fall, and it affords me peculiar satisfaction to be enabled to state that his efforts have been tolerably successful. The Natives (Beaver Indians) gave him a Friendly reception and as a proof of their good will and attachment to the cause not only supplied him with a considerable quantity of provisions but gave him a very respectable share of their hunts 7 packs weighing 520 lbs. The Indians that frequent this Post as throughout the District are dissatisfied with the North West Compy. and if it is well established this ensuing Fall, I have sanguine hopes that we shall not only secure all their hunts but those of the Freeman. This post is situated on the Beaver River about half a Days March beyond the N.W. post of Fort de pinnette and within Two Days March of the Rocky Mountain portage.

Buffalo and Deer are numerous in its vicinity as also Beaver and other small Game, altho' the Iroquois poaching system of killing Male and Female young and old promiscuously, has been practised for many Years. It is necessary to maintain this Establishment on a respectable footing, not only for the purpose of contesting the Trade vigorously with our Opponents, but as an auxiliary to the New Caledonia District, which is to be established this Season, as on it the Brigade must depend for Provisions in passing to and from the Depot, also for Canoes as there is no Birch of sufficient size in the Mountain for that purpose: the Navigation is bad and dangerous so that two sets of Canoes will be required for the Voyage.

A small Lake within Two and a half Days March of the post, produces abundance of Fish; the Soil is Fertile and Crops of Barley and Potatoes, may be raised with little exertion, so that with two good Fishermen, a couple of Fort Hunters and a little attention to horticulture there is not the smallest danger of Starvation, and the post will be enabled to render New Caledonia very important benefits. [fo. 21]

The Peace River District on the whole is greatly improved, and if any Gentleman possessing a tolerable notion of business and arrangement took the trouble of following up the Œconomical system this Season laid down, I am satisfied that it will in a very short time repay the losses incurred. The expences will appear heavier than might have been expected, but when it is taken into consideration that it is saddled with many charges which virtually belong to New Caledonia in consequence of our inability to establish that District last Fall it will be found that its affairs are materially improved.

The total Expences last year amounted to £5888,, 5,, 0; the returns to £1903,, 5,, 4 leaving a deficiency of £3985,, 0,, 8. This year the total expences are £4907,, 5,, 7 the returns £3473,, 15,, 6 and the loss £1433,, 10,, 1 thereby leaving a decrease on the loss of this year compared with last of £2551,, 10,, 7.

The District in order to give it the chance of contesting the Trade requires the following complement of Officers and Men vizt.:

FORT ST. MARYS

- 1 experienced District Master
- 1 Clerk confidential
- 1 do for Voyaging &c
- 2 Interpreters
- 1 Guide
- 2 Orkney Fishermen
- 2 European Servants
- 20 Canadian Voyageurs
- 10 Iroquois (free in Winter)
-
- 40 people Fort St. Marys.
-

COLVILE HOUSE

- 1 confidential Clerk in charge
- 1 Clerk for Voyaging &c
- 1 Interpreter
- 2 Orkney Fishermen
- 10 Canadian Voyageurs
- 4 Iroquois (free in Winter)

19 people Colvile House.

FORT DE PINNETTE

- 1 confidential Clerk in charge
- 1 Clerk for Voyaging &c
- 1 Interpreter
- 2 Orkney Fishermen
- 1 Guide (Canoe Builder)
- 10 Canadian Voyageurs
- 5 Iroquois

21 people Fort de Pinnette

In all Eighty people; with this support I am convinced that if the North West Compy. even keep up their present force we shall in one year after its being thus established secure at least two thirds of the Trade.

In the event of McKenzies River not being established next Season, I think the Trade of Peace River District may be extended with very great advantage by establishing a post in Hays River, about Six Days March across the Country to the North from Colvile House. Hays River takes its source in the Rocky Mountain, runs parallel with Peace River and discharges itself into Gt. Slave Lake, near the Mouth of McKenzies River: it is a Rich Country and is visited by the Chipewyans from Gt. Slave Lake and the Slave Indians belonging to McKenzies River. The North West Compy. had a post at this place for several years, but withdrew it last Season in

consequence of having established a post on the River O'L'Orr; which also rises in the Rocky Mountain, running nearly parallel with Hays River and emptying itself into McKenzies River about half way between the Mouth of the latter and the River that leads to Gt. Bears Lake. This new post it is supposed will attract the Slave Indians that usually frequented Hays River and those who reside in the vicinity of the latter [fo. 22] have last Fall been equiped at Vermillion, where they deliver their hunts: they were very anxious that we should have established a Post at this place last Fall, and retained their Summer hunts until very late in the Season expecting our arrival, but being disappointed, they delivered the whole to our opponents. Thirty pieces goods with two Officers an Interpreter and Eight Men would be sufficient for this post; the Country is well stocked with Buffalo and Deer and there are Lakes in the neighbourhood which produce Fish, so that as the Establishment would be small no danger of Starvation may be apprehended. It would be necessary that the supplies for this Post should be forwarded very early in the Season as the Navigation is tedious round by Gt. Slave Lake and up the current about 10 Days March. The returns would be taken overland to Colville House by the last Ice in Spring, as Gt. Slave Lake breaks up so late in the Season, that it would thereafter be impracticable to perform the Journey to and from the Depot by open Water. If we have the means of establishing McKenzies River this Season it will be necessary to settle Hays River as our upper post in the former will to a certainty attract all the Indians that now frequent it.

The Natives of Peace River are Beaver Indians, there are also a few emigrant Soataux from the plains; the former may be computed at about 130 to 150 hunters and the latter at about 20 to 30. The Beaver Indians are naturally of a bold Manly character, quick in resenting injuries, but possessing none of that detestable treachery, which characterises the Chipewyans, nor have they any of their selfish, covetous and avaricious dispositions: they are particularly uxorious, and the very suspicion of incontinence is attended with Trajick consequences; they take their revenge on the impulse of the

Moment but give their victim a chance of his Life by putting him on his defence. To Europeans they are kind and hospitable, and they boast that no white Man has ever fallen by the hands of any of their Tribe: they seldom or never intermarry with Neighbouring Tribes and it is against their Religious tenets to have connexion with the Civilized, so that there are no Beaver Indian half breeds, and that in some measure accounts for their indifference to the North West Coy., who are allied and have Meitiff progeny with all the other Tribes in North America. The Beaver Indians are naturally indolent and have become more so since the opposition, but I think good management and attention would rouse them to exertion, they are neglectful of personal show and comforts and until of late held European articles in little estimation except such as became absolutely necessary to them vizt.: Ammunition Tobacco Blankets &c.; they are now however excessively addicted to Spiritous Liquors which they use immoderately and unadulterated. Their constitutions are delicate, most probably owing to their want of attention to personal comforts and unrestrained use of ardent spirits; few attain the age of Fifty years and pulmonary complaints make dreadful ravages among them. Altho' naturally bold the N.W. discipline has been so rigorous, that of late years they have become timid and submissive, the spark however is not quite extinct, their wonted independence begins to revive and if they were but satisfied of our stability I am convinced they would change sides forthwith.

[fo. 23] The Trade of this District previous to opposition might be computed at One Hundred to one Hundred and Twenty packs and it would still produce that number, or even more, as the Country is Daily improving; if the Indians did exert themselves; this Season, however the aggregate returns do not exceed 50 packs, yet if the Honble. Compy. settle it next Season respectably and that the affairs are well managed I think our three posts should produce 50 packs.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OR NEW CALEDONIA DISTRICT.—The Trade of this Rich and valuable District has been monopolised by the North West Compy. for a great length of time and produces about one Hundred Packs annually, at a moderate

expense: the Natives are unacquainted with the use of Spiritous Liquors; Blankets Cloth and many other high priced European articles may also be dispensed with, unless like the other Tribes throughout the Country they get spoiled by opposition: the present standard of Barter is very high, in the ratio of 20 Beaver Skins for a short Gun, 10 to 15 for a copper kettle according to size, and 1 for 3 Inches Tobacco so that the Trade must yield enormous profits; credits are as yet unknown among them and should never be introduced as they tend to make the Indians dishonest and indolent. It was intended to have settled this Country last Fall, and a party was sent to explore it early in Spring under the charge of Mr. Giasson, and to apprise the Indians of our intention to settle among them. They had heard of the English through the Free Iroquois who hunt in that neighbourhood, and have been anxiously looking for us both last and the preceding year. Soon after Mr. Giasson had crossed the height of Land he fell in with several Indians of the Seccanee Tribe, who received him with the strongest expressions of regard and esteem, welcomed us to their Lands, and assured him that they would reserve the whole of their Furs and provisions until the arrival of our canoes. It appears that the North West Compy. have Tyrannized over them unmercifully, and they are now determined to shake off the Yoke; the principal chief admitted us to the freedom of the Country *ad infinitum* for a Copper Kettle and a Four point Blanket. The Country abounds with valuable Fur bearing animals; Beaver are so numerous that our people chiefly subsisted on them while there, and the produce of their own hunts amounted to about Six packs Furs. Herewith I take the liberty of handing a rough Sketch¹ which will convey some idea of the Country, Mr. Giasson's Route is marked in Red Ink, he has fixed on two eligible situations for Posts, as described on the Map, where he has lined out the sites of Forts and Marked as being taken possession of by the Honble. Hudsons Bay Company with the sanction and approbation of the Natives.

Beyond the height of Land Salmon is the principal article of

¹ This sketch has not been found.

sustenance and taken in great quantities in the Summer and Fall; there are also several Lakes abounding with White Fish. During the Summer Deer and Sheep are numerous but we must solely depend on Fish for the Winter Consumption and unless an abundant Stock is dried in the Summer and secured in the Fall, Starvation must inevitably follow. Two N.W. Clerks or Junior Partners Ferres & M Dougald (the latter formerly a Clerk in the Compys. Service who deserted from Mr. Clarke in Peace River) used every possible Means by Bribes and otherways to induce the Indians to massacre Giasson and his party, but as a proof of their friendly disposition, no violence was offered, on the contrary every kindness and attention was shown. Both Giasson and the Natives were in full expectation that our Brigade would arrive at the Mountain Portage about the middle of September, and all their Furs amounting to from 50 to 60 packs and provisions which the Natives had made in the course of the Season were reserved for us but our non arrival not only blasted all their hopes, but gave our Opponents a signal victory : it is really much to be regretted that we were unable to take advantage of the favorable impression made, I however sincerely trust that we shall not have a similar disappointment this year as it would ruin us for ever in the estimation of the Natives. The Indians are of a bold and Warlike character, Friendly yet irritable and easily roused, when they are capable of acts of the most savage ferocity; they stand on as little ceremony with the Life of a Man as that of a Beaver. Mr. Giasson and his party suffered great privations, and except the short time they were with the Natives, lived entirely on their own exertions; they were through fatigue and Starvation unable to bring the few Furs they had collected and left them en Casche in the Mountain, from whence they were taken in the course of the Winter to Fort de Pinnette and Mr. Giasson not meeting the Canoes according to previous arrangement returned to St. Marys in the early part of November. Black of the N.W. and a party of his Murderous associates (among them ' Joseph ' or ' The Son of the White Partridge ' who assassinated Mr. Keveny) remained at the North West post of Fort de Pinnette during the

Summer and Fall, in order to accompany our Brigade and renew their hostilities, but finding that we did not attempt going in, returned in the course of the Winter to Fort Chipewyan where these worthies usually congregate for the purpose of arranging and maturing their nefarious plans. The North West Coy. will know that if we once get firmly established in the New Caledonia the ruin of their Athabasca Trade is consummated, they mean therefore to stretch every Nerve to foil us in that quarter, and I have every reason to believe that the most desperate measures will be resorted to on their part, I have accordingly made such precautionary arrangements as my means would admit and entertain sanguine hopes that our plans will be crowned with success. Mr. Brown who has had charge of Fort Wedderburn District during the Winter is to be the Leader, and in every respect qualified for the charge, it is necessary that he should be well supported with Officers, and the Gentlemen I have selected will no doubt back him with firmness and spirit, they are Five in number vizt.: Messrs. Giasson, Greill, McBain, Manson and O'Doharty; they are to proceed from hence in Two Canoes accompanied by Twelve Men about the 10th of June with about 30 pieces goods, introduce themselves to the Natives, Build Houses and secure provisions for the Winter. Mr. Brown must be regulated by circumstances as to the points he will establish, but I do not conceive it would be prudent to divide his forces too much, I have therefore recommended his only settling two posts at first, one at Trout Lake, a little beyond the place marked 'N.W. Canoe tract' on the Map where there is an excellent Fishery and the other about 12 Days March further, to the point where Mr. Giasson's route marked in Red Ink terminates. Four Canoes with Twenty Men are expected to follow from Norway House so as to arrive at the Rocky Mountain portage early in September. The Rocky Mountain portage is about 13 to 14 Miles in length and very rugged, it will occupy upwards of a Week in transporting canoes and property: the North West Coy. have a set of Canoes at each end of the Portage which saves much labour, and after this year we must adopt the same plan, indeed the canoes even with the best care must be worn [fo. 25]

out before they can get that length. Our post at the foot of the Mountain near Fort de Pinnette must in future provide canoes for this District and provisions to convey them across Portage La Loche; this year few goods comparatively speaking can be taken in as the Brigade must be about half laden with Provisions owing to our inability to provide a Stock on the route. McKENZIES tract has not been followed for many Years, the one now pursued (which is less dangerous) is marked with an arrow ↑. The complement of Officers and Men for this District appears large, but after mature reflection I considered it best to err on the safe side, as in my humble opinion it would be better not to establish the Country at all, than run the risk of losing all our prospects by making a contemptable figure at our entrée. The Indians will now see that we are not the petty intruders that the North West Compy. have represented us, and they will join us with a confidence and security which nothing but a formidable appearance can infuse. It is impossible to give any thing like an accurate idea of the probable result of next Years Trade, indeed it cannot be taken as a fair criterion of our future prospects, as I anticipate the most animated opposition that has ever existed in the Country, but after weighing all difficulties I think about 50 packs will not be over-rating the returns.

The Free Iroquois in the neighbourhood of the Mountain are delighted that we are about to visit them, and if we have the means of supplying their wants I am convinced that we shall have the greater part of their hunts.

Connubial alliances are the best security we can have of the goodwill of the Natives, I have therefore recommended the Gentlemen to form connections with the principal Families immediately on their arrival, which is no difficult matter as the offer of their Wives & Daughters is the first token of their Friendship & hospitality.

GRAND OR MCKENZIES RIVER DISTRICT.—The Natives of this District did not even know us by Name until last Summer, when a few bands of the Slave Tribe straggled to the vicinity of Gt. Slave Lake and had a communication with Mr. McVicar, who introduced us to their acquaintance and informed them

that it was our intention to settle among them; this information delighted them, and they remained about our Fort expecting the arrival of our Canoes, in order to escort and secure their Friendly reception among the rest of the Natives; but the Season got so far advanced before the Slave Lake Brigade got to its destination, as to render it unsafe to delay their return longer, and despairing of seeing us, they directed their course towards the North West post at Riviere O'L'Orr; they are however confident that we shall visit their Lands in the course of next Fall and promised to reserve all their Furs and provisions until our arrival. The distance from Fort Resolution our Establishment at Gt. Slave Lake to the head of McKenzies River is about 120 Miles and from thence to the lowest post Fort de Lucy¹ about 820 Miles, the current so strong that it is usually run by loaded canoes in Eight Days. [fo. 26]

The North West Coy. have changed their Posts repeatedly in this District, on account of the difficulty of procuring sustenance; there is more danger to be apprehended from Starvation here than in any part of North America, and unless the greatest precaution is taken the people must inevitably perish.

The N.W. Coy. have at present three posts² in the District which produce from Eighty to one hundred packs valuable Furs, but the Trade thereof is more heavy and inconvenient than in any other part of the Country where they are unopposed on account of the delay in bringing their returns to Market: the River generally breaks up from the 5th to the 10th of June and is not open more than Four Months, so that they can bring the returns no further than Fort Chipewyan that year; the supplies are also required to be a Year in advance on hand at Fort Chipewyan, as the Water is not open more than Four Months, which is fully occupied in transporting the returns and supplies between Fort Chipewyan and the Wintering Grounds; so that the capital embarked in the MKenzie River Trade lays dormant Twelve Months longer than any

¹ Evidently Fort Good Hope, established in 1804 and the lowest of the N.W.C. posts on the Mackenzie River. The distance between Fort Resolution and Fort Good Hope corresponds almost exactly with the figures given by Simpson.

² I.e. Fort Alexander, Fort Good Hope and Fort Liard.

other of their Establishments; this was a matter of little importance to them when in the Zenith of their glory, but is now I understand very severely felt; the Trade is however very profitable as it is conducted at a trifling expense, few Men and Goods being required, and the Standard very high. Starvation is the only danger to be apprehended in this District; the resources of the country are so limited that our Opponents cannot venture to introduce the force necessary to carry on their usual system of violence and outrage, indeed I am doubtful that they would attempt it, lest it might exasperate the Indians who are of a ferocious disposition and from the uniform cruelty and oppression exercised over them they have ample cause to stand in dread of retributive vengeance. The principal post now in this District is called Wintzells Fort¹ about Eight Days March up the River O'L'Orr (called in the Maps the River of the Mountain) which takes its source in the Rocky Mountain running a N.E. direction, and falls into M'Kenzie's River at a place called the Forks, about 180 Miles from the head of M'Kenzie's River; this post was amongst the first established in the District, but abandoned several years ago in consequence of the people being massacred by the Indians to the number of Sixteen or Eighteen and not re-established until last year. It is situated in the heart of a very rich Country, abounding with valuable Fur bearing animals, also a considerable number of Buffalo and Deer: the object of establishing this post I imagine was to attract the Indians frequenting Hays River, and those belonging to M'Kenzie's River who were inclined to wander towards Gt. Slave Lake, fearing that we might this Season oppose them at the former place. They have an other Post at Willow River² near Bears Lake River and one

¹ Fort Liard was the only post on the Liard River at the time of the amalgamation.

² The location of the several posts on the Mackenzie River is a matter of some difficulty. The information given by Simpson was obtained at second or third hand and his geography is frequently unreliable. The difficulty is increased by the fact that the posts were frequently shifted long distances for the accommodation of the Indians. The post to which Simpson refers was Fort Alexander. This fort is described as established by the N.W.C. in 1817, five hours down the Mackenzie from the entrance of Willow Lake River into the Mackenzie, and

called Fort de Lucy about 240 Miles lower down. The Indians that frequent Riviere O'L'Orr or the River of the Mountains are chiefly of the Slave Tribe, and those who frequent the lower posts are Dog Rib, Rabbit and Squint Eye Tribes; I cannot form a correct estimate of their numbers, but the Slave Tribe is very considerable. Beyond Fort de Lucy there are several other Nations, but altho the Natives are desirous to have a Trading establishment near them, our Opponents have not attempted to penetrate further on account of the danger of Famine. Great Bears Lake is the most certain place of procuring sustenance, as with the necessary precaution an abundant Stock of Fish may be taken in the Fall, for the Winter consumption, but the Fur bearing animals are not so numerous as in many other parts of the Country, having been hunted for a long series of Years while the North West Coy. had a post there and since it has been withdrawn very few Indians remain. It is however supposed that if we did establish a post there the Natives would return and it is more than probable that the Game is considerably encreased as they have been undisturbed for many years. Our means this Season I fear will not enable us to settle this District so fully as was intended, at least I apprehend so from the tenor of Govr. Williams's last Letter, yet if two Canoes with about 12 or 14 Men besides Officers could be spared, I think it would be very desirable to make a beginning at Riviere O'L'Orr which would no doubt produce handsome returns. The Indians are extremely indolent and miserable Beaver hunters, otherways they might make immense returns, they are also wretched bad large animal hunters, and find great difficulty in keeping themselves and Families in existence, no dependence can therefore be placed on them for any considerable Stock of Provisions. The North West Coy. chiefly depend on the exertions of their half breed Hunters and a few Chipewyans from this neighbourhood. We have not been a sufficient length of time in the Country to raise up auxiliaries of the former description and the restrictions which the

[fo. 27]

removed to the Forks, that is to the location of Fort Simpson in 1821. Fort Norman, near the mouth of Great Bear Lake, was established at the same time, 320 miles down the Mackenzie River.

Honble. Committee have put on Matrimonial alliances and which I consider most baneful to the interests of the Company are tantamount to a prohibition of forming a most important chain of connection with the Natives, so that we have solely to depend on the Indians who have no other feelings than those which interest and mercenary views create towards us; it is never matured to attachment and a price is only required to make those on whom our existence depends our inveterate Enemies. I think that three or Four Chipewyan hunters from this place and Great Slave Lake may be prevailed on to accompany us, if it is considered prudent to attempt establishing the Country this ensuing Fall. I have paved the way as far as lays in my power by securing the services of Mr. Andries, who from his knowledge of the Country and Natives, is the fittest person in the Coys. Service to conduct the Expedition; his Woman speaks the Language, and is engaged as an Interpreter; I have also secured a Guide¹ who has been in the Service of the North West Coy. in that District for many years.

[fo. 28] Riviere O'L'Orr is the only part of the Country where Gardening can be attempted with any probability of success and there to a very limited extent. There is a small Lake within two Days March of the post which produces a few Fish, but it has been known to fail repeatedly, no dependence can therefore be placed thereon. Notwithstanding these gloomy prospects, Mr. Andries is willing to undertake the mission and entertains confident hopes of success; but I think 'tis more than probable that we must confine our views in the Northerly direction next Season to the establishing ourselves firmly at Gt. Slave Lake and settling the Post at Montagne Island as a Provision Depot for McKenzie's River. It was my intention had Mr. Clarke of Isle a la Crosse fulfilled his promise of reserving a few Goods to have sent Mr. Andrews from hence in the course of next Month, for the purpose of apprising the Indians of our intention to visit them this Fall in order that they might provide for our reception, but that Gentleman seems to have lavished the whole of his liberal outfit to very little purpose, and

¹ Probably Cayenne Groyne, cf. pp. 244, 263. The English chief and his son had been engaged as hunters for the expedition. Cf. *supra*, p. 329.

the consequence is that in all probability this valuable District must remain unsettled for another year.

In the Foregoing pages I have endeavoured to give your Honors an idea of the present general state of the Companys Establishments in Athabasca, and for particulars must take the liberty of referring you to my Journal and the Reports of the Gentlemen in charge of the Districts. I shall now do myself the honor of submitting a few observations which may throw some additional light on the affairs of this hitherto unfortunate Department and if the suggestions I am about to make are acted upon, I feel satisfied that our opponents cannot prolong the contest beyond an other year, when the Trade will not only repay the heavy losses sustained but realize very handsome profits.

1st. It is perfectly ascertained that the North West Company, have for these last two years used every possible exertion to expel us from the Country; No expedient has been left untried to raise funds for this purpose, and the property lavished in the attempt to effect it has been enormous. The Agents both in London and Canada took great pains in the year 1819 to convince the Wintering proprietors, that if the opposition was followed up with vigour for two Years after that period, the Hudsons Bay Coy. would become disgusted with the affairs of Athabasca and relinquish the contest; or be compelled to accept such terms as the North West Coy. chose to dictate; but if disappointed in these hopes they must call a Meeting of their Creditors and acknowledge themselves beaten out of the Field as both their Funds and Credit would by that time be exhausted.¹ The last two Years has therefore been a desperate Struggle on their part, and altho they seem inclined to protract it, they are Daily getting more feeble, and

¹ The resources of the N.W.C. had been practically exhausted by litigation with Selkirk and the struggle with the H.B.C., so that a successful ending of the contest in Athabaska was essential to avoid bankruptcy. Simpson's source of information for this statement was probably Governor Williams who had learnt about it from some letters he had intercepted in 1819. Cf. MS. H.B.C. D.1/1 fo. 32 and 50.

every Member of the Association except the McGillivray party become sick of the contest. The Honble. Hudsons Bay Coy. on the contrary, altho their affairs may be said to be totally neglected, are Daily gaining ground, and if adequate means were furnished and the business conducted with tolerable regularity and judgement, I am convinced that one or two years at the utmost would give us the control of the Department which is now the main spring of their existence.

2nd. Physical power is all that is required, an additional levy of One Hundred Men and Officers independent of those expected from Canada this Summer are necessary to establish the whole of the Country: the advance of money to bring these Men into the Interior I am aware is considerable, but the enormous profits on goods sold to the Canadians would reduce the Wages, which is the grand item of expenditure to at least one third of the nominal amount. Hitherto we have been compelled to pay a great proportion thereof in hard cash, [fo. 29] because we have not had Goods to supply them; even at the Depot they are discontented because they cannot get finery at several hundred p Cent profit, Cape Madaira at a Guinea p Bottle and various other articles at any price required. At Fort Wedderburn where we had Forty Four Men this Season at from 1000 to 2000 livers Wages we could have paid $\frac{3}{4}$ ths thereof in Spirits at 60 livers p pint or £18 Stg. p Gallon, which is the price I have this year charged, and the people are dissatisfied and unhappy that we have not been enabled to indulge them at those prices.

It has been held out to the people year after year, that large Brigades of Men were coming from Canada, but finding that these statements were incorrect, they know that we are dependent on their Services and exact such terms as they think proper; subordination is at an end, a common Voyageur does not hesitate to disobey the orders given to him or to call his Master a 'Sacra Crapp' knowing that the offence must be overlooked when his contract expires, and when he is asked to renew his engagement he not only insists on having all fines struck off his account but his Wages advanced about one third in some cases more. It is dangerous to attempt beating these

fellows into good discipline as they may take it into their heads to return the compliment knowing that the other Fort offers an asylum for them: heavy fines is the only thing to bring them to a sense of their duty and these we cannot attempt to impose until a sufficient number of men are provided to enable us to dispense with the services of the most troublesome. The North West Coy. I believe have even more trouble with their people than we have, but they are altogether a superior class of Men, Stout active fellows in every respect qualified for the laborious Duties they have to perform, whereas the Compys. Agents in Canada appear to select the most miserable wretches the country produces for this Service, out of 38 or 40 fresh hands brought in last Summer there are not 10 real good Voyageurs.

Some of the most valuable North West Servants are this Fall going to Canada and are desirous to come up the following Spring for this Service, the Agents should therefore be instructed to engage them. The fate of Athabasca and the country in general, depends on due attention being paid to this branch of the business, and I trust your Honors will see the propriety of giving the necessary instructions thereon to the Agents, who I regret to say appear to pay very little attention to the important charge with which they are entrusted. A few European Servants and Orkney Fishermen are much required; about 25 of each would be sufficient for this Department, they should be engaged for Five Years for *General Service not the Compys. Territories* and with them we could dispense with more than the same number of Canadians: in time of danger two highlanders are worth half a Doz Canadian Bullies and two Orkney Fishermen will do the duty of Four such as we now have.

3d. I regret to say that generally speaking, there is a great dearth of talent among the officers of this Department, particularly the subordinate ones, some of whom are become spoiled by Opposition, and knowing that their Services are absolutely required take the most shameful advantages: Many of these fellows can hardly sign their own Names, have Salys. from £50 to £175 p annum and when required to do their duty, if unpleasant, threaten to 'go free' or in other words join [fo. 30]

the North West Coy.; I shall endeavour to purge the Country of a few of them, and have no doubt but they will be made examples of when the Govr. in Chief as [sic] acquainted with their conduct. A few Young Men of tolerable Education, and moderate expectations on Five Year contracts, are much required; they can in Scotland be engaged at from £30 to £50 and would in a very short time do the duty of some fellows now in the employ at double and treble those Salys.; in all we require about Twelve Young Men of 18 to 20 Years of Age; they cannot get into the interior the year they arrive at York, as the Brigade takes its departure before the Ships come into the Bay, I would therefore recommend that they are sent out with Bands of Indians the first Winter, which will innure them to the privations incident to the Country, give them a knowledge of the Cree Language which is understood throughout the Department, familiarise them to the habits and customs of the Natives and teach them the Rudiments of the Fur Trade; their future advancement will of course depend on their conduct and ability; Annexed I beg to hand a List¹ of the Officers under my charge with a few remarks as to their character and abilities.

4th. My Journal pages 58 to 64 contains the Indent of this Department for the ensuing year, it has been made out with great care and attention, and is in every way sufficient to establish the whole Country even if opposition was at an end. This outfit should be carefully packed up at York Factory in the course of the Winter, and in readiness to be delivered on the arrival of the Brigades from Inland, instead of which, the goods were sent to the Rock Depot last Spring for the purpose of being packed and delivered, where it is quite impossible to transact business with regularity or correctness. In the short space of about a Fortnight it is necessary to engage the people, wind up accounts, pack goods &c. &c. &c. all this is done by two or three Officers with no other accommodation than a miserable confined Store where no more than one gang of them can properly work at a time: the Gentlemen are compelled to make up their writings in Tents, either drenched with

¹ This list is now lost.

Rain or broiling under a vertical Sun, annoyed by Drunken Canadians and tormented by miriads of Musquitoes, Bull and Sand Flies; Books accounts and property scattered about, and either lost, mislaid or Stolen, so that the affairs get involved in a labyrinth of confusion. Many of the most important articles are frequently not forthcoming owing to the carelessness of the Clerks at York Factory; if a bale of Twine is missing the answer is ' You must go without, as through some mistake it was not brought from the Factory ' so that because these Gentlemen neglect their duty the Athabasca Winterers must go without the absolute necessities of Life: Last Season I could not even get sufficient Stationery to make up the Books and Accounts of the Department. The Men have not an opportunity of spending their wages because a variety of articles that would have realized several hundred p Cent profit were accidentally left behind and the consequence is that the Company must pay their Servants Wages in hard Cash. All this loss, inconvenience and irregularity might be avoided by permitting the Brigade to go direct to the Factory and the Canadian Establishment there would not come to one half the Expense it now does. Indeed if the present Route was altogether discontinued, I think it would be very important to the interests of the Department, and I mean to call the Govr. in Chief's attention to that point of meeting: the route I would [fo. 31] substitute is from Portage Fort du Trait by the burnt wood carrying place, Nelson Lake, Split Lake and Port Nelson River, instead of Hill River by Norway House, the Winnipeg and Cumberland: the former from all I can learn is less intricate, materially shorter and would save about one Month in the Voyage out and back from York. The Montreal Brigade would pursue the present Track and take in their Cargoes at Norway House, and the Servants whose Contracts had expired might take up their goods from the Factory, so that no additional expense would be incurred in transporting them from York to Norway House. Provisions might in my opinion be furnished with equal facility as at present: the Lesser Slave Lake Canoes could with the assistance of Isle a la Crosse, bring a sufficient quantity of Pemican from the Moose Portage

and Carlton for the Voyage from Portage La Loche to Split Lake and back, and the Edmonton Boats could take the quantity required for the remainder of the voyage to Split Lake by the River that falls out of Play Green Lake into Cross Lake. If a Guide can be found at Portage Fort du Trait, I mean to send two Canoes by this Track, in order to have it explored, and if my information is correct, I think it will be found about $1/3$ d Shorter than that which we now pursued [sic] and equally safe: but in either case I do not hesitate to recommend strongly that business of this Department should in future be conducted at the York Factory instead of the Rock Depot, it will reduce the Expenses materially, the arrangements gone into with system, regularity and one half the trouble, and our people will be highly gratified at being enabled to disgorge their enormous Wages. The experiment is this Summer to be made of bringing Boats in this length, and if it is found to answer, of which I have not the smallest doubt, it will be of essential importance to the Department, as in that case the business may be conducted with about $2/3$ ds of the people now required, it will entirely supercede the use of Canoes for this District and furnish a great proportion of the Supplies for Gt. Slave Lake and Peace River and enable us to introduce European Servants instead of Canadians which would be a most important advantage. The M'Kenzies River and New Caledonian Trades must however be always conducted by Canoes as the distance is so great that Boats cannot perform the Voyage in the short interval of Open Water.

5th. I believe that little or no attention has hitherto been paid to the accounts of this Department, Mr. Miles (a Gentleman whose valuable services this year merits my best acknowledgments and who I beg leave to recommend particularly to the notice of the Honble. Committee) has however taken much pains to bring them into some form, and altho not yet so perfect as I could wish, will convey some idea of the manner in which the property has been disposed of. The balance Sheet exhibits a nominal loss of £ ;¹ I say nominal because

¹ These figures have also been omitted in the original MS.

the actual loss is under half that Sum and the other half goes to the Credit of Norway House and York Factory: under the present regulations, Athabasca Department is saddled with every Expense by the lower Establishments, indeed it appears to be looked upon as fair Game generally, by our Neighbours of the English Establishments and hunted down unmercifully to give a fictitious appearance of handsome profits on their own Trade, and the affairs of Athabasca a more ruinous aspect than they really merit. Our York Factory Supplies are at present furnished at an advance of about 15 p Cent on the prices of that Establishment which includes the Depot [fo. 32] Expenses, and Goods are sold at the latter place to our Canadians, the profits of which are devoured by York Factory amounting to about £1500 p annum, whereas the whole supplies should be charged to Athabasca direct and the profits on Goods Sold to the Canadians be put to its credit: from my own observation last Summer I am convinced that if the Depot had been abundantly supplied with Goods, particularly fineries and Luxuries the profits on goods sold to the people alone would amount to from £2000 to £2500. Norway House has also some very rich pickings out of this persecuted Department, on an average from £1500 to £2000 p annum which should also go to its credit being the profits on Tobacco and other Goods brought from Canada. The whole of the Brigade Expenses, Men's Wages, Canoes and Provisions are in a lump charged against Athabasca; on its arrival at Norway House the Cargo is taken on account of that Post at the Montreal prices and the Tobacco which is brought up at our immediate cost and expense is received at 1/8d p lb. but whatever quantity thereof is required by us is charged at 4/8d p lb and 18 p Cent making a Net profit of 3/10d or 233 p Cent to Norway House on every pound of Tobacco delivered to Athabasca: Silver Works Belts &c are charged in like manner to us at the enormous profit of 118 p Cent, altho' brought up as the Tobacco at our expense and risk, and these handsome profits are monopolised by Norway House for no other reason than that it happens to be the place of rendezvous for the Athabasca Brigades previous to their departure inland.

I would therefore beg leave to suggest that the whole of the supplies that are furnished on Athabasca Account both from York Factory and Canada should be charged at a price sufficient to cover all expenses of Storage &c and that Athabasca should have the privilege of enjoying the profits which so reasonably and justly belong to it and hitherto extorted by those Establishments which would reduce the enormous loss that now appears by fully one half.

The inadequate Supply of Men to bring in the goods required for the use of this Department, has also been a great drawback on the Trade; the article of Spirits alone, had we the means of bringing in a sufficient quantity would have produced a clear profit of from 12 to £1500 besides a few more packs Furs and abundance of Provisions. After viewing the subject in all its bearings, I am satisfied that one bold and judicious effort would put the officers of this Department on a very respectable footing; handsome profits cannot be expected while opposition continues, but if the Business is well arranged next year, I have no hesitation in saying that the loss on the Trade if any will be a mere trifle.

[fo. 33] 6th. This Department is very dependent on its neighbouring Establishments of Isle a la Crosse and Lesser Slave Lake; indeed without their assistance it is quite impossible to get either out of or into Athabasca, as to them we entirely look for the maintenance of our people between Portage La Loche and York Factory, but instead of rendering such assistance cheerfully and readily, altho' they are handsomely paid for any supplies they may furnish, and it is the positive orders of the Govr. in Chief that every accommodation is granted I regret to say that the Gentlemen of those Departments look upon us with a jealous and invidious Eye. From Mr Clarke of Isle a la Crosse particularly I have this season met with more opposition, and the officers of the Department have suffered more loss and inconvenience than our declared Enemy the North West Compy. When I first became acquainted with that Gentleman at the Rock Depot and Norway House he was very communicative on all points, and exhibited an ardent interest in the welfare and prosperity of the general cause; I did

remark that he had his peculiarities, a vast deal of self importance and vanity, but had no idea he was capable of carrying this hobby to lengths that would do any other injury than expose himself to ridicule. Being at that time totally ignorant of the Trade and necessary arrangements of this Department, Govr. Williams requested Mr Clarke would assist me by his advice and experience, which he agreed to do with much apparent cheerfulness, and I must confess his plausible manner, and the zeal he professed, gave me a very high opinion of him, but the sequel will prove that I was egregiously deceived.

We parted with Govr. Williams at the Depot and proceeded to Norway House on our way Inland, and Mr Clarke in conformity with the Govrs. instructions took the management of the Canadian arrangements, but instead of making a discreet and proper use of the powers with which he was invested, I discovered when too late that he took every advantage of my credulity and extraordinary pains to derange the affairs of Athabasca, he appropriated to the Service of Isle a la Crosse the Flower of the people and a great many more than the Governor intended, endeavoured to incite the Canadians against me (with whom he is a great favorite as he courts popularity at any sacrifice or Expense, not at his own private cost but that of his Employers) monopolised property of every description intended for the use of Athabasca, and made over the refuse of Men and Goods to me: I remonstrated with him on the impropriety of his conduct without avail, his answer usually was 'I shall not attempt to argue with you but Govr. Williams has given me discretionary powers and I shall take the responsibility on my own Shoulders'. Messrs. Bird, Sutherland and many other experienced Officers were Eye Witnesses of this flagrant abuse of the confidence reposed in him, and endeavoured to reason him into their matured ideas, but he remained inflexible and the consequence is that I have had to struggle against a multitude of difficulties, and the Department has suffered very severe losses: instead of assisting me by his advice and means, he seems to have set every engine in motion to ruin our Trade and prospects; he buoyed me up with hopes of relief throughout the Winter and in the

course of the Spring, none of which have been realised, on the contrary more industry seems to have been exerted to embarrass the affairs of Athabasca than to promote those of Isle a la Crosse; the instructions of the Govr. in Chief totally disregarded, and when these charges are brought home against him he attempts to recriminate and has the assurance to say that Govr. Williams and myself have preconcerted his destruction, but that he has a character to maintain as well as either of us, and he will maintain it at all hazards: I shall not dwell further at present on this Gentleman's conduct but for additional [fo. 34] information on that subject beg leave to refer to my correspondence and remarks on pages 10, 14, 16, 97 & 112 [MS.] of my Journal; suffice it to say that the manner in which the affairs of Isle a la Crosse have this year been conducted, has done more injury to this Department than the North West Opposition. Mr Clarke pursued the same line of conduct towards Mr Robertson last year and thereby nearly ruined the business of the Department and exposed the lives of the people to the most imminent dangers of Starvation: his administration in the memorable year 1816/17 is so fraught with mismanagement, want of decision and folly, and the consequences have been so awfully calamitous, that it is painful to touch on the subject, no doubt however remains that any man of the weakest abilities had he but common sense might have in a great measure escaped the evil. In my humble opinion this man should be got rid of without delay as his folly (which is almost too mild a term) is more dangerous than the malice of our avowed Enemies. With regard to Isle a la Crosse I think it should be attached to the Athabasca Department as if its interests are distinct they will from their proximity be in direct opposition to each other: much property has this year been sacrificed through Mr Clarkes exertions to debauch the Athabasca Indians from this Establishment and the Trade been in consequence ruined. Lesser Slave Lake is now attached to the Saskatchewan Department, on its assistance we also depend for Provisions, but instead of a neighbourly co-operation it wages War against Peace River and the Trade of both Districts have in consequence suffered materially; I

would therefore beg leave to suggest, that the whole of the Canadian Establishments say Athabasca, Isle a la Crosse and Lesser Slave Lake should be comprised in one Department and the charge thereof given to some Gentleman competent to the management thereof, which would greatly facilitate the general arrangements and give a control over our Canadian Servants, which cannot otherways be secured; as we are now situated, if a Canadian is asked to renew his Engagement, his answer in all probability is 'I shall not accept your offer as Mr Clarke will give me so much more, besides presents of Rum Feathers &c &c' or 'Mr Lewis promised me so much if I would engage with him for Lesser Slave Lake' so that instead of having one Market for their Services, they have three and the competition is as great as if totally unconnected or in direct opposition to each other. This subject I mean to submit particularly to the consideration of the Govr. in Chief and if the plan I have taken the liberty of suggesting is acted upon I am convinced that we shall very soon experience the good effects.

7th. The supplies of this Department generally speaking are of good quality, the Ironmongery excepted, which is really a disgrace to the Tradesmen who furnish it. On our Axes Beaver Traps and Guns the existence of the people and Trade in a great measure depends, therefore the utmost attention should be paid to the manufacture of those articles. The Beaver Traps (marked MS¹ on the Bait plate) are too weak and made of the worst British Iron, whereas they should be of the best Swedish: the Cross plate is too slight and should be fastened by a Screw and Nut instead of a Clenched Nail. The Traps are now packed up as required for use whereas the pieces should be packed up seperately in order to be put together at pleasure, which would prevent breakage in the transport hither: the Indians complain that the Traps are altogether too slight, so weak as not to hold a full grown Beaver. The NW Traps are much stronger, and the Indians frequently

[fo. 35]

¹ Perhaps M F should be read instead of M S (which is, however, clearly written in the original manuscript). M F would provide the initials of the firm of Messrs. Moreton & Foster, one of the firms supplying the H.B.C. with ironmongery.

retain part of their hunts for the purpose of trading their Traps with our opponents. The axes (marked Foster¹) are also of the worst materials and badly tempered, they should be manufactured of the best Swedish Iron and German Steel and tempered with great care: those we had this Season were as brittle as Glass during the severity of the Winter; the maker should be informed that they are most required when the Thermometer is about 50 degrees below Zero: it is scarcely possible to describe the misery we have this Season suffered from the bad quality of the axes, frequently unable to provide Fire Wood, and were it not for those bought and Stolen from our opponents Servants our sufferings must have been very great. The Indians are aware of their inferior quality and invariably reserve a few Skins in order to obtain a supply from the North West Coy. The small sized hatchets are too large and round in the Eye. The Trading Guns (marked Wilson) are not to be compared with those of 'Barnets' make which the NW Coy. import,² the Locks are badly finished, soft in the hammer, the Tumbler and Shear not properly tempered and the pan loses the Powder: the NW Locks are altogether better finished and bridled inside or the Tumbler covered. The Ice Chissels³ are badly tempered and the Indians are frequently under the necessity of leaving their hunting Grounds and coming to the Fort, 10, 15 & 20 Days March in order to have them repaired, thereby wasting the most valuable part of the Season and exposing us by these visits to a great unnecessary expense. Our Iron Work is the most important article of Trade in this Country, the utmost care and attention should therefore be paid to have it of good quality.

8th. Our opponents have upon the whole been less troublesome this year than I had reason to expect, but their pacific behaviour arose more from a dread of the consequences of a different line of conduct, than from inclination, as their

¹ Axes supplied by the firm of Moreton & Foster.

² In 1822 the Committee for the management of trade ordered that William Wilson and Barnett & Son should supply the trading guns in equal proportions.

³ Ice chisels were employed by the Indian hunters to break the ice and thus gain access to the beaver lodges.

proceedings in the early part of the Fall indicated greater hostility than has been experienced for some years; indeed they were never so formidable in the Athabasca Department as this Season, and both Agents and Actors appear to have been carefully selected as fit engines for a renewal of their outrages and atrocities. The Declaration of Julian Tavernur dit St. Pickey which accompanies this (a copy of which is in pages 78 & 81 [MS.] of my Journal) will give an accurate idea of their intended operations, and the conduct of Simon McGillivray previous to his capture (the particulars of which are in pages 36 to 40 [MS.] of my Journal) confirms a great part of this Mans Statement, but the decisive measures I found it necessary to adopt, prevented their attempting the excesses which Mr. Archd. Norman McLeod seems to have taken so much pains to recommend and inculcate. Your Honors are no doubt by this time fully acquainted with the particulars of Mr. Robertsons capture, the object of which was to embarrass the Compys. affairs in Athabasca, and withdraw from us the confidence of the Natives: it certainly had at first the desired effect, and the re-appearance of the North West prisoners, who were rescued at the Grand Rapid induced them to believe that our destiny [fo. 36] was fixed and our career in the North terminated for ever; I however took much pains and succeeded in removing all their fears, and they went to their hunting Grounds better satisfied, and in greater Security than they ever did before. Our opponents being thus foiled were desirous to ascertain what materials I was composed of, and miscreants were chosen to make the test, who were capable of the foulest crimes which they would have carried into effect had they found me so passive as they anticipated, but they soon discovered that the consequences would have been serious, and after McGillivrays escape, altho reinforced by Black the Outlaw and an Indian assassin, together with all the most desperate characters they could collect were deterred from putting their Murderous plans into effect; had it been otherways the catastrophe would assuredly have been memorable as we were fully resolved to die hard, and always prepared for offensive or defensive measures: they however prudently avoided all further violence and the campaign I am

happy to say has terminated without any remarkable event. The apprehension of McGillivray (which I now suspect to have been illegal) may perhaps expose me to a prosecution in the Courts of Canada, on the operation of a Warrant issuing from some of their tools in the Magistracy of the Indian Territories, but I should conceive that no responsibility attaches to me on that head as I studiously avoided committing myself by any Act or Word: at all events I am of opinion that McGillivrays conduct and intentions as set forth in St. Pickeys declaration would sufficiently justify the step on the plea of Self defence.

I am now in the midst of our Summer arrangements and preparing to start for the Depot where I shall again take the liberty of addressing you Meantime

I have the Honor to be with much respect

Honble. Sirs

Your most Obedient Humble Servant

GEO. SIMPSON.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

POSTS AND DISTRICTS

Athabaska

In 1820-21 the Athabaska District of the Hudson's Bay Company included Fort Wedderburn, Berens House and Harrisons House. For a history of the penetration of the Company into these regions see Introduction.

The first post in Athabaska was established by Peter Pond, for the N.W.C., in 1778, on the Elk River thirty miles from Lake Athabaska. In 1788 Roderick McKenzie removed it to Lake Athabaska, to the site later known as the Old Fort. Although Ross and Turner wintered there, 1791-92, and Nottingham House was established from 1802 to 1806 (under Peter Fidler), the H.B.C. made no serious attempt to settle in Athabaska until 1814-15 (see Introduction), by which time the N.W.C. had dominated the district. The N.W.C. had, at various times, fifteen posts in this district, but in 1815 they were reduced to eight, Chipewyan and Pierre au Calumet on Athabaska Lake and River, Fort Vermilion, Hay River, Dunvegan and St. John's on Peace River, and Slave Lake and Turtle Creek on Great Slave Lake.

Berens House (Pierre au Calumet)

The story of Berens House is perhaps best told in the words of William Brown's Report on Athabaska Lake District (H.B.C. MS. B. 39/e/3). 'In the same summer (1819) Mr. Joseph Greill settled Beren's House at Pierre au Calumet on the Athabasca River in place of the Chutes in Rivierre Labiche, where a post was in the preceeding year. He procured a considerable quantity of provisions in the summer, and nearly a pack of furs. In the fall the charge of the Post was given to Mr. Aulay McAulay, who for some time had the appearance of doing well. But owing to the measles coming among his Indians, and the N.W. debauching his Fort hunters, he was so far reduced in regard of provisions that in the month of December he was obliged to enter into an arrangement with Mr. Stewart who acted for the N.W.C. in opposition to him for a supply of provisions to maintain himself and his party till they reached this place (Fort Wedderburn). This he did at an enormous price, and at the same time made him subscribe to certain articles and lodge four pieces of goods and a considerable deal of loose property in the hands of the N.W.C. as for the fulfilment of these stipulations, at the same time binding themselves to return the whole of the property thus deposited on the 6th of September following provided the agreement was acted up to, but when applied to for this at the time specified they pretended the agreement had been infringed, and refused to deliver up the property.'

Berens House was on the Athabaska River, three days march from Fort Wedderburn. For its re-establishment see pp. 46, 69, and p. 74.

For the N.W.C. house at this spot see *Pierre au Calumet*.

Carlton House

The original Carlton House was established by James Sanderson and James Bird for the H.B.C., on the north bank of the Saskatchewan River, nineteen miles below the junction of the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers, in autumn 1795. It was probably abandoned 1801-02. About 1805 the house was removed to the south branch of the Saskatchewan River. In 1810 it was again removed, its new site being near the crossing place on the North Saskatchewan River. The post was constantly opposed by the N.W.C. At the amalgamation of the two companies the N.W.C. post (*La Montée*) in this district was dismantled and Carlton House remained. The post was accidentally burnt down in 1885, during the half-breed rising under Louis Riel, and was never re-established.

Churchill

As early as 1688 the H.B.C. had decided on a settlement on the Churchill River, but the building was burnt down in 1689. In 1691 Governor Geyer was ordered to proceed with the building, but nothing more is heard of a post on the Churchill River until 1717, when James Knight built a fort called Prince of Wales Fort (H.B.C. to R. Staunton, 4th June, 1719) about seven miles above the mouth of the river. A new stone fort, also named Fort Prince of Wales, was started on Eskimo Point, at the mouth of the Churchill River, in 1732. It was in occupation by 1740, but was not completely fortified until 1771, and was captured by the French in 1782. The site has now been identified and cleared and the fort's cannon recovered. In 1783 Samuel Hearne erected a new fort on the very site of the original wooden fort built by Knight. A post has been maintained there since that date. There was from early times a strong feeling that Churchill should be the centre for the northern trade, rather than York.

Chipewyan, Fort

The N.W.C. stronghold on Lake Athabaska. The first Fort Chipewyan was built by Roderick McKenzie on the south shore of Lake Athabaska in 1788. It was described by Turnor in 1791 as 'the compleatest Inland House I have seen in this Country this is the Grand Magazine of the Athapiscow Country'. It fell into decay, and was eventually abandoned as a residence, being used only as a fishing station thereafter, and known as the Old Fort. The new fort on the north shore of the lake was in use as early as 1804, and became next in importance after Fort William among the forts of the N.W.C. Besides being the headquarters of the Athabaska District, it served as the depot of the Peace River and Mackenzie River Districts. At the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and

the N.W.C. the new Fort Chipewyan became the headquarters of the H.B.C. in the Athabaska District.

Colville House

A H.B.C. post built in 1818 on the northern bank of Peace River near the junction of Peace River and Loon River. John Clarke had chosen the site and had sent Halcro ahead to build the house, but on his arrival in September 1818 had found that Halcro had made very little progress. The building was finished, however, on 8th November, 1818. During the winter 1819-20 Colville House contained two officers and ten men.

Cumberland House

was established in 1774, on Sturgeon Lake, by Samuel Hearne. It was the first H.B.C. post established on the Saskatchewan waters, and was important as the point at which the brigades for Athabaska left the Saskatchewan River and turned north to enter the Churchill River at Frog Portage (Portage du Traité). Its establishment marks the beginning of the policy of penetration into the interior by the H.B.C., and until 1821 the Governors of Rupert's Land often made Cumberland House their winter quarters. The foundations of a new house were laid in 1789, but it was not completed until 1792.

Dunvegan

A N.W.C. post at the Forks of the Smoky River, on the south bank of the Peace River. It is first mentioned in John Stuart's Journal for 1805, and despite difficulties it remained in occupation until 1821. The fact that the fort had a well-maintained garden was a great advantage to it in those years. On the amalgamation of the two companies Dunvegan was kept in occupation, but it was abandoned in 1825, owing to Indian troubles. In 1827 there were proposals to re-establish it, and this was done in 1828, under Chief Trader Colin Campbell. The Journals for the post survive up to 1867, many of them being in the Alberta Archives, Edmonton.

Edmonton House

Founded in 1795, on the north bank of the North Saskatchewan River about a mile above the mouth of the Sturgeon River, by William Tomison. [It was called Edmonton House, probably in compliment to Sir James Winterlake, Bart., then Deputy Governor of the H.B.C., who lived at Edmonton, Middlesex.] Although Nelson House was established in 1799, about eighty miles further up the river, Edmonton House remained in constant occupation until, in 1800-01, Nelson House was abandoned and Edmonton House was removed to the site of the present city of Edmonton. Here, as usual, it faced the N.W.C. Fort Augustus in opposition. From this site (still called Edmonton House) it was removed to oppose the N.W.C. Terre Blanche House at the Forks of the Terre Blanche and Saskatchewan Rivers in 1810. This was found to be a most

inconvenient situation, and in winter 1812-13 James Bird again built a 'New Factory' (still called Edmonton House) very near the site of that which had been abandoned in 1810, on the site of the present city of Edmonton. This is the post referred to by Simpson. It was 'situated about twenty miles westward of the junction of the Red Willow Creek with the Saskatchewan River, on the north Bank of the last mentioned River' (James Bird), and was for many years the chief distributing centre for the western part of the H.B.C.'s territories. The H.B.C. Edmonton House remained in occupation after the amalgamation with the N.W.C., whose Fort Augustus was eventually abandoned.

Fond du Lac

As early as 1800 Peter Fidler wrote that the N.W.C. had established a post at Fond du Lac, near the eastern end of Lake Athabaska. There were few fur-bearing animals in that district, and the maintenance of the post appeared singular to Simpson.

Great Slave Lake

The N.W.C. post at Great Slave Lake was established in 1786. During the season 1815-16 the H.B.C. established a post there, but it only lasted a few weeks owing to the fact that Aulay McAulay, the officer in charge, was forced by starvation to surrender to the N.W.C. and to enter into an agreement not to trade with the natives during that season. An unsuccessful attempt to establish a post there was again made by Aulay McAulay in 1818-19. Although he built the post he could not attract the Indians. In 1819 Robert McVicar was more successful, and was reported as being there with nineteen men. In 1820-21 the only H.B.C. post in the Great Slave Lake district was Fort Resolution; two other posts, at Mountain Island and Hay River were, however, contemplated.

Green Lake Post

was established by William Auld in the autumn of 1799 at about three-quarters of a mile from the N.W.C. house (which had been there since 1781). During March 1817 the H.B.C. post was attacked by the N.W.C. and its men were imprisoned, but it was re-established during the next year. In 1820 the H.B.C. post was situated on the west bank of the lake, at its northern end, whilst the N.W.C. house was on the opposite shore, and facing it.

Harrisons House

A H.B.C. post with this name was established in the summer of 1819 by G. P. Andries. It was near the eastern end of Lake Athabaska, about a hundred and fifty miles from Fort Wedderburn, with whose trade it was apt to interfere. Its chief value to the H.B.C. was that it could produce an abundant supply of whitefish (Brown's Report on Athabaska, 1821). An early N.W.C. post here

had been abandoned owing to trouble with the Indians (cf. p. 361), but the N.W.C. re-established a post at Harrisons House in 1819, to abandon it in 1821.

Hay River

The N.W.C. had developed a post on Hay River, Great Slave Lake District, during the struggle with the H.B.C., but in November 1818 Duncan Campbell wrote to James Bird that 'the N.W. Fort in Hay River, a River that falls into the Great Slave Lake, was blown up by powder this summer'. It does not seem to have been rebuilt, and Simpson's idea that the N.W.C. had withdrawn their post from that district because they preferred the Liard River (p. 386-87) appears to be incorrect. Colin Robertson intended to send Vital Bourassa to establish Hay River for the H.B.C. in 1819, but he had not the goods to do so, and he was again frustrated in the summer of 1820. Simpson took up the project in 1820-21, but the H.B.C. post which he planned was not established because of the amalgamation of the two companies. In 1823 Chief Trader Allan Macdonell was appointed to Hay River, but as he was given another post shortly afterwards it appears that the Hay River post was not set up even then.

Ile-à-la-Crosse

Lake Isle à la Crosse was an important stage in the journey into Athabaska. The N.W.C. had a post there as early as 1790, and by 1798 a new N.W.C. post was in existence at the southern end of the lake, three-quarters of a mile north-east of the old settlement. Some of the H.B.C.'s men wintered there 1790-91 (Philip Turnor, Malcolm Ross and Peter Fidler) but no H.B.C. post was built there until 1799, when Peter Fidler wrote that 'Mr. Auld left Mr. Linkletter with 6 men to build here'. This post was abandoned in 1806, but a post was re-established in 1809-10. This post was burnt down by the N.W.C. in 1811, but was rebuilt in 1814. The site of the H.B.C. post was changed in 1815, but the N.W.C. continued their fierce opposition to this post, 'the most advanced towards the valuable Beaver Country.' In 1817 they captured the post's goods, and in 1818 they began to fence it round on the land side. John Clarke built a new fort here in 1820, and called it Fort Superior. He was in charge 1820-21, and therefore had the duty of providing a certain amount of labour and provisions for the repair of Portage La Loche (for which see *Journal*, pp. 32, 263).

Lac la Loche (Methy Lake)

In December 1819 John Clarke wrote that he had advised some Indians to visit Athabaska in the spring of that year, and that they would without doubt return from Athabaska to the Ile-à-la-Crosse district, when they heard of his presence again. He therefore established a post at Lake la Loche under Messrs. Perrin and Swain to intercept such Indians as should so return, and to prevent

them from being got hold of by the N.W.C. The post was at the south end of the lake, and near the N.W.C. post.

Lac la Pluie (Rainy Lake)

As early as 1777 the H.B.C. was anxious to establish a post at Rainy Lake. During the year 1791 a post was established below Manitou Fall, on Rainy River. It was some thirty-two miles below the N.W.C. post at Kettle Portage, Rainy River, about a mile and a half down river from the lake. In 1795 this H.B.C. post was dismantled, another post having been established at the mouth of Rainy River in October 1794. The post at the river mouth was abandoned in 1797, and the H.B.C. did not return to Rainy Lake until 1816. In that year the N.W.C. post there was captured by Lord Selkirk and handed over to the H.B.C. In September 1817 the N.W.C. re-acquired possession of their post, the H.B.C. men occupying a post which had previously belonged to some freemen. In the spring of 1818 the H.B.C. erected another post down the Rainy River; it was miserably built, and had to be enlarged, winter 1818-19. Nicholas Garry describes this post in 1821 as being close to Kettle Portage (Portage de Chaudière) and about a mile downstream from the N.W.C. post. On the amalgamation of the two companies the H.B.C. post ('on the north bank of the River about Two hundred Yards from the Portage') was retained. From 1830 onwards the post was called Fort Frances, after Simpson's wife. It remained a fur trade post until 1897-98, when it was transferred to the Salesshop Department of the H.B.C. The Salesshop was burnt down in 1903.

Lac-la-Ronge

In 1808 William Auld wrote that he was preparing to establish a post at Lac-la-Ronge, and that 'the Canadians have never yet been opposed by us there'. But a H.B.C. post had been established there for the trading season 1797-98 by George Charles. The post was still in operation in 1809, but was subsequently abandoned. In 1818-19 an unsuccessful attempt to re-establish the post was made, and some sort of post seems to have been set up during 1819 and maintained during 1820-21. This Lac-la-Ronge post was administered from Ile-à-la-Crosse, and in March 1821 John Clarke wrote projecting the setting up of a new post there, in close proximity to the N.W.C. guard-house. The post was still in occupation in 1823, in which year it was decided that it should be abandoned in favour of a post on Pelican Lake. The decision does not appear to have been carried out, but by July 1830 the surrounding country had been exhausted and the Lac-la-Ronge trade was removed, first to Deer's Lake, and then to Rapid River, the Lac-la-Ronge post being abandoned.

Lesser Slave Lake

The H.B.C. post at Lesser Slave Lake during Simpson's time in Athabasca was Fort Waterloo, established in 1818. Here John Lee Lewes was in charge from 1818 to 1821, and he caused considerable trouble to the officers in

Athabaska and at Ile-à-la-Crosse by regarding himself as a subordinate of the Saskatchewan District, and refusing to co-operate unless he had direct orders to do so.

As early as 1799 Peter Fidler visited Lesser Slave Lake from Greenwich House on Red Deer's Lake, and described the 'Canadian establishment' there. The H.B.C. maintained their establishment at Red Deer's Lake, but did not attempt to settle Lesser Slave Lake until the 1815-20 period. They then met severe opposition from the N.W.C. An attempt to set up a H.B.C. house on the lake under Decoigne failed in 1815-16, and he had to leave some of the H.B.C.'s goods in the possession of the N.W.C. Decoigne tried again in 1816-17, but it is clear that the H.B.C. had no post there in March 1818, when Lewes went there from Red Deer's Lake to recover the property left there by Decoigne. At the time of Lewes's visit there was a deserted 'Old Fort' at the eastern end of the lake, and a N.W.C. fort in occupation at the western end.

Fort Waterloo appears to have been established at the western end of the lake during summer 1818, and one, Smith, was reported to be there, in a starving condition, when Lewes arrived in the interior in November 1818. Lewes did not himself get to Fort Waterloo until January 1819, and he found that by that time the N.W.C. had built a watch house only fifty yards away from the fort, and were conducting a most bitter opposition. They ultimately enticed the Indians away from Lesser Slave Lake to Red Deer's Lake, whither Lewes followed in spring 1819, leaving Smith once more in charge at Lesser Slave Lake.

During winter 1819-20 Fort Waterloo was firmly established by Lewes, but it was abandoned on the amalgamation of the two companies and the trade of the district was administered from the N.W.C. post.

Mackenzie River

rises as the Athabaska River in Mount Brown at about 52° N. It assumes the name Mackenzie River (after Alexander—later Sir Alexander—Mackenzie, by whom it was first navigated in 1798) after emerging from the Great Slave Lake. The river then flows northwards to Beaufort Sea in the Arctic Ocean. Its entire length is about 2,500 miles. The N.W.C. had three posts in the Mackenzie River district in 1819-20, and its settlement by the H.B.C. was strongly advised by Colin Robertson in 1819. During the summer of 1820 Robert McVicar made arrangements from Great Slave Lake for the settlement of Mackenzie River, but he was forced to abandon them from lack of supplies. Simpson planned an expedition for the settlement of this district, under the leadership of George Peter Andries, but the amalgamation of the two companies made this unnecessary, and the expedition never took place.

McLeod, Fort

A post established by the N.W.C. in 1791, on Peace River, just below the Forks of the Peace River and the Smoky River. It is supposed to have been

named after Archibald Norman McLeod. The first post was on the north-east bank of Peace River, but by 1800 it had been transferred to the opposite bank. After the amalgamation of the two companies the H.B.C. maintained Fort McLeod as an outpost of Dunvegan.

Mountain Island

A post at Mountain Island was projected as an outpost from Fort Resolution, Great Slave Lake. The post was to be established during the season 1819-20 and again during 1820-21, but the project had to be abandoned owing to scarcity of goods. It was meant to serve as a provision depot for the Mackenzie River District. The N.W.C. already had a post at Mountain Island in 1820, and the H.B.C. post was never actually set up.

Nelson House

By September 1800 an H.B.C. post known as Nelson House had been built at the Grand Fishing Place on Nelson Lake, Churchill River, by the men who would have accompanied Malcolm Ross to Athabaska in 1799. The post was moved to an island three miles west of its old site in 1809. Nelson House was subordinate to Churchill Factory until 1815, when it came under York, as part of the New Churchill District. After 1821 Nelson House became the headquarters of the Nelson River District, but it was abandoned in 1827 owing to the exhaustion of the fur-bearing animals: Split Lake House was then the only post maintained in the district.

For the importance of Nelson House on the Burntwood route cf. p. 26, n. 4.

New Caledonia

The region of the Stuart and Upper Fraser Rivers, a large territory of indefinite boundaries in northern British Columbia, named by Simon Fraser on his first expedition west of the Rockies in 1805. Morice (*History of the northern interior of British Columbia*) describes it as the tract lying between the Coast Range and the Rocky Mountains, from 51° 30' to 57° lat. North. In 1818 Great Britain and the U.S.A. agreed on a period of ten years of joint occupation, during which the nationals of both countries might take part in the trade of the district. The H.B.C. took little advantage of this agreement until their quarrel with the N.W.C. was over, although from about 1815 onwards their traders had been urging them to settle the district. In 1818 John Clarke wrote from Peace River that it was desirable to establish New Caledonia, and that dressed leather was preferable to blankets for the trade there. In January 1819 he wrote that Ignace Giasson, 'an active and interested young man' was preparing to leave for New Caledonia with a band of thirteen Iroquois. At the same time Colin Robertson was urging Governor Williams to settle the district on the ground that half the fur returns of the N.W.C. were got from their posts in New Caledonia. Williams assented, since many Iroquois who had quarrelled with

the N.W.C. had offered their services to the H.B.C. In January 1820, therefore, Robertson arranged for Giasson to 'cross the Rocky Mountains this Spring with a band of free Iroquois', and by March 1820 Giasson had got as far as Sheep River, Rocky Mountains, from which place he reported the progress he had made and the difficulties he had met. Finlayson set off to meet Giasson at Rocky Mountain Portage in summer 1820, but he had started too late from Norway House and Simpson, finding him at Fort Wedderburn on his arrival, appointed him to St. Mary's, Peace River. Owing to this and his own late start and lack of supplies, Giasson failed to make a proper establishment. This was the situation when Simpson came on the scene (see *Journal*, pp. 2, 103).

Norway House

During 1814 the H.B.C. sent out eight Norwegians from Europe to construct a 'land carriage'—the Winter Road—from York Factory to the interior. The Committee had received a Report from Thomas Thomas on the water communications from York Factory to Lake Winnipeg, and they decided (wrongly as the event proved) that the stations necessary for changing craft on the river navigation would also serve as stations on the Winter Road. At the same time James Bird, Governor of the Northern Department, wanted to facilitate communications with Montreal, and so the first post on the Winter Road was started 'at the outlet of Lake Winnipeg', where it would communicate with Montreal and would be on the water route to York. This was Norway House. The Norwegians were under the direction of Peter Fidler, who was then at Jack River Post, about twenty miles distant, on a small island on the south-east side of Playgreen Lake opposite the mouth of Jack River. Norway House was then on Mossy Point on the west bank of the Nelson River, on the north of Lake Winnipeg and opposite a place now known as Warren Landing. The post received some help from settlers who had been driven from the Red River Colony after the massacre of 1816. James Bird persuaded nine of them to remain on Mossy Point and to build there during the winter and the following summer. By summer 1817 the Jack River post had been abandoned, and Norway House was occupied, although the buildings were still unfinished.

Norway House then played a most important part in the communications both between Montreal and the west and between York Factory and the western posts. Its own trade was negligible, and its expense considerable, but it was often used as the meeting-place for the Council of the Northern Department after 1821.

In 1824 the house built by the Norwegians was destroyed by fire, and as a result of recent criticism the new house was built merely to act as a store, and Chief Trader J. P. Pruden, in 1825, was forbidden to keep a general mess or to give balls or convivial parties during summer. In 1826, owing to danger from floods, the establishment was removed to the east bank of the Jack River 'about four miles below the old Fort of Jack River and twenty miles above the lately abandoned establishment of Norway House'. Here, under the management of Chief Traders John McLeod and Donald Ross, it steadily increased in

importance, both as a depot for the trade and as the administrative centre for the Northern Department. Here the last meeting of the Northern Council was held before the transfer of Rupert's Land to the Dominion in 1870.

Oxford-House

A H.B.C. post situated at the north-east end of Oxford Lake (or Holy Lake) on the Hayes River route from Norway House and Lake Winnipeg to York Factory. It was first established in 1798, a new post was planned there in 1815, but the old buildings were still in use in 1821.

Peace River

A large river rising in British Columbia at about lat. 50° N. and long. 120-123° W. It is about 1,100 miles long and forms a useful link with the western coast. After receiving Finlay's branch, the Peace River breaks through the Rocky Mountains and flows north-east until it reaches the neighbourhood of Lake Athabaska, where it joins the stream which flows from this lake to form the Slave River, flowing northwards to Great Slave Lake. From 1802-06, when Peter Fidler was establishing Nottingham House on Lake Athabaska, he was also planning an establishment in Peace River. Here was the only district from which meat supplies could be got for the brigade going out in spring from Athabaska. The Peace River attempts of those years failed, as did the Athabaska establishment, owing to the inveterate hostility of the 'Old Company'. The H.B.C.'s attempts to establish Peace River during the years 1815-20 were also bitterly opposed. The brigades were stopped, the men were imprisoned at Fort Vermilion, the Indians were driven away, and the trade was ruined. In 1815 fifteen H.B.C. men there were starved to death, and John Clarke himself was forced by lack of provisions to become dependent on the servants of the N.W.C. He had his revenge in the autumn of 1818, however, when he was able to capture Fort Vermilion and to attract to the H.B.C. all the Indians in the vicinity of Fort Dunvegan, because the N.W.C. Peace River canoes had been 'taken by ice' on leaving Fort Chipewyan and were unable to get to their post by open water. In 1820-21 the H.B.C.'s Peace River District consisted of Colville House, Fort St. George (see under Fort de Pinette) and Fort St. Mary's.

Pembina River, Forks of

Simpson had the idea that it might be advisable to establish an outpost from Berens House at this spot, in order to protect the Indians going to Ile-à-la-Crosse, and to act as a provision post. The post does not appear to have been established, however. By the 'Forks of Pembina River' Simpson meant twelve miles east of the present Fort McMurray; the Pembina River to which he refers is now known as the Christina River, which joins with the Clearwater River and then flows into the Athabaska River at Fort McMurray.

Pierre au Calumet

For the H.B.C. post at Pierre au Calumet see Berens House. The N.W.C. post there was established in 1802, by John Clarke, who was at that time in the service of the N.W.C. The post was still in occupation in March 1820, when John Stuart of the N.W.C. entertained Franklin there, but it was apparently abandoned during the summer of 1820.

Pinette, Fort de (Epinette)

also called Fort St. George. In January 1820 Colin Robertson wrote that he had intended to establish 'Fort de Pinnet' but that shortage of provisions prevented him from so doing. If sufficient remains were left at Fort Wedderburn he proposed to establish Pinette during the summer of that year. Fort de Pinette was actually established in October 1820 from St. Mary's, Peace River. It was on Peace River, at the mouth of the Pine River. The post was half a day's march beyond the N.W.C. post of the same name on Peace River, and was within two days' march of Rocky Mountain Portage. Its object was to facilitate trade with the free Iroquois, and to push out towards New Caledonia.

Point de Roche (Stoney Point)

Great Slave Lake, see under Stoney Island. From Simpson's *Journal* (p. 271; cf. p. 288, n. 1) there would also appear to be a Point de Roche, a good fishing post, within thirty-six miles of Fort Wedderburn, but it is not mentioned in the Reports of the period and, not being a separate establishment, kept no separate accounts.

Providence, Fort

A N.W.C. fort on the northern arm of the Great Slave Lake. The original fort was established by Alexander Mackenzie at the mouth of the Yellowknife River in 1796. The post was abandoned in 1823.

Resolution, Fort

See Great Slave Lake.

Rock Depot

The Rock House was a depot on the bank of the Hayes River, a hundred and twenty miles above York Factory. From York to this point the river, though swift, contains no falls or impassable rapids, and fair-sized boats can therefore be used without having to unload cargo. At the Rock cargo must be unloaded, and both boat and cargo carried over the rocky barrier in the stream. Upstream from the Rock to Norway House, near Lake Winnipeg, there are thirty such carrying places in a distance of 265 miles; for this journey it was

therefore desirable to use canoes or smaller boats than could be used to advantage below the Rock. Thus the Rock was the rendezvous at which the canoes and boats from Athabaska and elsewhere in the interior met the heavier boats from York, discharged their returns and loaded with supplies for the interior.

The Depot at the Rock was built partly as a result of Selkirk's desire for a 'Winter Road' from York Factory to the Red River Colony. The H.B.C. was willing to pay for the road as far as Lake Winnipeg, for Colin Robertson was urging the need of a depot in the interior. Instructions to build the Rock House were therefore sent out in 1813. The Depot was never intended to be a trading post for the Indians, and the H.B.C. was always afraid that it might interfere with the trade of other posts. It considerably expedited the communications with Athabaska, but it was subject to some severe criticism. Colin Robertson thought that the depot for the trade of that district should be Churchill House, and Simpson thought that it should be York Factory itself (cf. pp. 27, 402).

For the position of the Rock Depot, and for a map of the Winter Road, see J. B. Tyrrell, *Hudson Bay Exploring Expedition*, 22nd Report of Ontario Bureau of Mines, 1913, part 1, pp. 161-209. See also Winter Road, *infra*, p. 426.

St. Mary's Fort

Peace River District, was established by John Clarke in 1818. It was at Smoky Forks on the Peace River, and was probably called St. Mary's after Selkirk's birthplace. At the time of Simpson's *Journal* St. Mary's was under the charge of Charles Thomas, and the buildings had been moved three times, in search of a better site.

Split Lake House

was established by the H.B.C. in 1790, and was abandoned in 1794. It was rebuilt in 1797, and in 1824 Roderick McKenzie, Junior, was in charge of it. From 1827 onwards it was the centre of the trade of the Nelson River District, but its final abandonment was decided on in 1833.

Stoney Island

An island in Great Slave Lake, near the south shore of the lake. In February 1819 Aulay McAulay, who was engaged in establishing Great Slave Lake, sent four men under Amable Grignon to build at Stoney Island, about four days' march from Fort Resolution, where there was a good place for fish. There was also another outpost from Fort Resolution, called Stoney Point, or Point de Roche, about eight leagues from the Fort, a good fishing place and, as McAulay said, a place where the Indians usually pass from the north end of the lake. Simpson (p. 58-9) is possibly confusing the two posts when he says that the Stoney Island is a good place for intercepting the Indians. The two outposts kept no separate accounts and were not separate establishments; they counted as parts of Fort Resolution.

Superior, Fort

See Ile-à-la-Crosse.

Swampy Lake House

was established by the H.B.C. in 1816, since Bird thought that it would make a good depot for the Athabaska trade. It was situated on the eastern bank of Swampy Lake (55° 15' N. lat. and 90° W. long.), which is about ten miles in length and one and a half miles wide at its widest.

Swan River

District, in 1820-21, consisted of Swan River, Fort Hibernia and Red Deer River. Swan River House was established in 1790 some miles above the outlet of Swan River into Swan Lake. Its object was to oppose the N.W.C. who were intercepting the Indians who were coming to visit York and Severn. The post was abandoned by 1800, but was re-established higher up the river during the spring of 1807. In 1824 Fort Pelly was set up at the north end of the 'Indian Elbow' on Assiniboine River as the winter establishment of the district, to supersede Swan River House, Fort Dauphin and Red Deer River Post; the original intention was to evacuate Fort Pelly during the summer (when it would have required a large garrison) and to leave a couple of men at Swan River House to guard any property remaining on hand from one year to another. Fort Pelly, however, developed into a permanent and important establishment, and the 'Old Fort' on Swan River became merely a stage on the route to Fort Pelly.

Vermilion, Fort

A N.W.C. post in the Peace River District, established about 1800. David Thompson describes it in 1804 as on the right bank of the Peace River, seventeen miles below Keg River. This would be almost seventy miles upstream from the site of the modern Fort Vermilion. From 1802-06 the H.B.C. were in spasmodic opposition to the N.W.C. in this district, but their posts of Mansfield House and Nottingham House were abandoned, and there was no serious rivalry until the arrival of Robertson and Clarke (1815-20). Vermilion was then a strong outpost of the N.W.C. and the scene of several episodes in the struggle. After the amalgamation of the two companies the H.B.C. post at Colville House was abandoned and Vermilion became the chief post on the Lower Peace River. By 1822-23 it had been moved to the north bank of the Peace River, and by 1831 it was moved to a site on the south bank, lower down the river, and near the site of the former Colville House.

Waterloo, Fort

See Lesser Slave Lake.

Wedderburn, Fort

The chief H.B.C. post in the Athabaska District. It was established in 1815 by John Clarke on an island in Lake Athabaska (then called Coal Island and now known as Potato Island). In his 1816 Report and in his correspondence James Bird refers to it as Fort Chippewyan, the name by which the N.W.C. Fort on the Lake went, but otherwise Fort Wedderburn was always known as such, being named after one of the family names of Andrew Wedderburn (later Colvile). Its situation in 1821 is fully described in Simpson's 1821 Report (cf. p. 360). In 1818 the brigade found on their arrival that the fort was in a deplorable condition, chimneys, doors and joists having been removed in preparation for a rebuilding which was interrupted for lack of provisions. It was proposed to remove the buildings during the summer of 1819 to a point where they would not be so dominated by the N.W.C. Fort Chipewyan. At this time Alexander McDonald wrote that 'their buildings now flank us on both sides, and with the desperadoes they have, our lives are in the greatest danger'. The rebuilding was completed in the summer of 1819 by Aulay McAulay, but, as may be seen from the *Journal and Report*, the N.W.C. built a Watch House near to the new fort, and were still unpleasantly close neighbours, and Fort Wedderburn was still very badly built. After the amalgamation of the two companies Fort Wedderburn was abandoned and the trade of the district was carried on from Fort Chipewyan.

Winter Road

From York Factory to Red River Colony. See also Rock Depot and Norway House.

This road ran up the Hayes River to the mouth of Deer River, up Deer and Fox Rivers to Fort Daer, south of which it ran straight across country for about eighty miles to Oxford House, crossing Deer Lake and a string of thirteen small lakes on the way. In its later stages it was cut out as a straight wide road through the forest, on which oxen and horses could be used. It can be traced on the map accompanying J. B. Tyrrell's *Hudson Bay Exploring Expedition*, 22nd Report of Ontario Bureau of Mines, 1913.

York Factory

In 1682 'Fort Nelson' was established by Governor Bridgar on the Nelson River: it was destroyed by the French in 1683 but in 1684 Radisson built York Factory on Hayes River. This was taken by the French in 1694, retaken by the English in 1696, once more captured, by d'Iberville, in 1697, and held by the French until 1713. It was restored at the Treaty of Utrecht and became the principal trade and supply centre of the H.B.C., but was again taken by the French, under Admiral Lapérouse, in 1782. This time the post was destroyed. A new post was then built, to be moved in 1783 to the site of the present post, on the northern bank of the Hayes River about four miles above its outlet

at Beacon Point. Immune from the opposition of the N.W.C., the management at York developed slovenly habits, and Governor Williams reported that it was a disgrace to the affairs of the Honourable Company, and that cleanliness 'which hitherto has been so shamefully disregarded' would have to be re-introduced. Whether from the slackness of the personnel, or from its situation, York Factory was always in those days prone to attacks of scurvy. At the time of Simpson's *Journal* York seems to have been still the scene of much inefficiency, although it was the headquarters of the northern trade. In 1821 Nicholas Garry wrote 'the fort is built on piles, but though drained on every side is still sinking. It is in a most dangerous situation and should be removed'. By 1830 Simpson was able to report that 'the Establishment is altogether in a very complete state, except as regards the old Octagon building in the middle of the Factory, which is falling into decay', and the Factory Journal for 1845 reports that there were 'two men employed taking down a ruinous shed, the last building of the factory of 1821'.

APPENDIX B

BIOGRAPHICAL

Adams, Joseph

A Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1815. He was at Berens House, 1819-20, at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21, and was reported on by William Brown as 'an excellent man, both on the voyage and at the wintering ground'.

Andries, George Peter

A Canadian; he left the N.W.C. and joined the H.B.C. as a clerk in 1818, and proceeded to Athabaska. He established Harrisons House in the summer of 1819, and remained in charge there during the next two years. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he remained in Athabaska until 1823, when he retired to Canada.

Back, Admiral Sir George

Admiral Sir George Back (1796-1878) accompanied Franklin on his first and second expeditions to the Polar Seas as a midshipman. He also, in 1833-35, commanded the expedition sent out in search of the Ross Expedition. For a full life see *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Baleau, Antoine

A Meuron. Joined the H.B.C. service as a middleman in 1818. In 1818-19 he was at St. Mary's, Peace River, in 1819-20 in the Athabaska district, and in 1820-21 again at St. Mary's, Peace River.

Bernard, François

A Canadian from Montreal employed by the H.B.C. as a middleman. He joined the Company's service in 1817 and was at Cumberland House, 1818-19. From 1819 to 1821 he was serving in the Athabaska district.

Bibeau

There were two Bibeau's in Athabaska, 1820-21, both Canadian middlemen. François joined the H.B.C. in 1815 and was in Athabaska from 1818 to 1821.

He was reported as 'not fit for voyaging owing to a hurt he received in the service'. Paul Bibeau joined the H.B.C. in 1820, was stationed at Fort Wedderburn, and was described as a quiet and obedient man.

Bird, James

James Bird, born at Acton in Middlesex, about 1773, entered the H.B.C. service in 1788, when he was first employed as a writer at York Factory. In 1792 he went inland, and in 1793-94 was in charge of the South Branch House (South Saskatchewan River). In 1794-95 he was in charge of the Company's post at Nipoway on the Saskatchewan River between Cumberland House and the South Branch. He was in charge at Carlton House from 1795 to 1799. David Thompson mentions meeting him at Cumberland House on 23rd June, 1797. In 1799-1800 he was at Edmonton House, and subsequently remained a master and trader inland. During his period at Edmonton in 1799 he established Acton House on the North Saskatchewan near the mouth of the Clearwater River. During the period 1804-16 he was in charge of the Saskatchewan district at Edmonton, and in 1816-17 he was at Carlton House. After Semple's death he acted as governor until the arrival of Williams in 1818. Colin Robertson thought he was the only man who could succeed in Athabaska, and Bird was ordered to go there, but instead he was Chief Factor in charge at Cumberland House during 1818-19, and was afterwards appointed to the Red River district, 1819-21. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. he was given charge of the Lower Red River district, 1821-22. In 1822 he was granted a year's furlough, afterwards assuming the charge of Upper Red River district until 1st June, 1824. In 1815 he was appointed a Councillor of the Governor in Chief in Assiniboia, which appointment was renewed in 1822 and again in 1839. He became a Chief Factor under the Deed Poll of 1821 and accompanied Nicholas Garry from Fort William to Norway House. In his diary Garry notes: 'Parted with much regret from Mr. Bird, whom to the last I found useful and kind.' Bird retired to the Red River Settlement in 1824, having previously notified his intention to do so in accordance with the 24th article of the Deed Poll. He subsequently held various responsible appointments in the settlement, and in 1836 was appointed Registrar for land sales and grants at the Red River Settlement. Bird married Elizabeth, an Indian woman, on 30th March, 1821; she died in October 1834. He then married Mary Lowman, a widow, on 22nd January, 1835. He died on 18th October, 1856.

Black, Samuel

Samuel Black was born at Aberdeen about 1785 and came to Canada in 1802 as a clerk in the X.Y. Company, from which he passed into the N.W.C. in 1804. He was an aggressive member of the N.W.C., and, with Simon McGillivray, Jnr., incurred the special enmity of Simpson. Prior to the amalgamation he was concerned in many attacks on the posts of the H.B.C., including an affair

at Green Lake in March, 1816, when several of the H.B.C. servants were taken prisoners. He was also responsible for the capture of Colin Robertson in October, 1818. Black and Peter Skene Ogden were such particularly bitter partizans of the N.W.C. during the period of conflict between the two companies that great objection was made by the H.B.C. officers to associating with them. The value of his services, however, may be indicated by their presentation to him, at the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C., of a ring bearing the inscription : 'To the most worthy of the Northwesters'. After the amalgamation Black joined the service of the H.B.C. as a first class clerk in 1823. He was promoted Chief Trader in the following year. In the summer of 1824 he was employed in the exploration of Finlay Branch, in consequence of which much attention has been focussed on him. In 1825 he was given charge of Fort Nez Perces in the Columbia department, remaining until 1830, when he was transferred to the charge of Kamloops (Thompson River district). He became Chief Factor in 1837, and remained at Kamloops until he was killed while in his room at this post by an Indian on 9th February, 1841. Simpson, in a letter written to Chief Factor J. Keith on 21st June, 1841, referred to Black as 'our late and much valued friend Mr. Samuel Black'.

Blanchette, Joseph

A Canadian engaged by the H.B.C. as a middleman in 1817. He was in the Peace River district, 1818-19; in Athabaska, 1819-20; and at Colville House, 1820-21.

Blondin, Pierre

Was born in the H.B.C.'s territories in 1797 and was engaged by the H.B.C. as a middleman in 1816. In 1818-19 he was at St. Mary's, Peace River, and from 1819 to 1821 he was serving in the Athabaska district. William Brown described him as a 'good voyageur but lazy at the Fort'.

Bouche

There were two men named Bouche at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21. One, Paul Bouche, or Boucher, was usually called Lamallice (*vide infra*). The other, Wakan Bouche, was a Canadian half-breed engaged as an interpreter. He joined the H.B.C. in 1816, was at St. Mary's, Peace River, 1819-20, and at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21. His contract expired in 1824. He was described as active and alert for voyaging after Indians, sometimes disobedient and insolent. During the winter of 1820-21 he incurred fines amounting to 700 livres for his conduct at the fort.

Bourassa, Vital

Vital Bourassa entered the H.B.C. service in 1815. He was employed in Athabaska, 1815-16; at Great Slave Lake, 1816-17; at Ile-à-la-Crosse,

1817-18; at Peace River, 1818-19; at St. Mary's, Peace River, 1819-20, and he remained at Peace River during 1820-21. He was employed in the Athabaska district after the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. and subsequently at York Factory, until he retired to Canada in 1824.

Brown, William

William Brown, a native of Kilmaurs near Glasgow, was born about 1790. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1811. In 1812-13 he is described as a 'Writer' in the Churchill district, and during the next two years as a trader at Deer Lake. He returned to Europe in 1815, and in 1817 he successfully applied for re-admission to the Company's service, and was then in charge of the Manitoba district, which consisted of Halkett's House, Williams House, Big Point House and Fort Dauphin, during 1818-19. He afterwards became District Master at Fort Resolution on Great Slave Lake, 1819-20, and subsequently at Fort Wedderburn on Lake Athabaska, 1820-21. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in the latter year he was appointed to the New Caledonia district and made a Chief Trader. He established Fort Kilmaurs in the Babine country, to the north-west of Fort St. James, in the autumn of 1822, and remained in charge there during the ensuing winter. In 1823 he was again appointed to the Babine country, and the following year he was appointed jointly with William Connolly in charge of the New Caledonia district. He was instructed by the Council of 1824 to remain in the Babine country during the summer of 1825, and to take steps 'to prosecute the discoveries and extend the Trade in that quarter as also to the North and West thereof'. In June 1826 he was censured by the Council for not adequately carrying out these instructions, but from the Kilmaurs Correspondence for 1825 it transpires that Brown had made preparations for going on this journey of discovery when he was prevented by illness from doing so. His illness later increased, and in 1826 he was granted leave of absence to Europe on account of it. He died in Europe on 19th March, 1827.

Bunn, Thomas

Thomas Bunn was a native of Hendon, Middlesex. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1797, when he became a writer at Albany Factory. He was in charge at Osnaburgh House for a short period in the summer of 1799, during the absence of John McKay, and similarly at Brandon House in the summer of 1801, between the departure of Robert Goodwin and the arrival of John McKay. In 1803 he was transferred to York Factory in the capacity of writer, and appears to have served here almost continuously from that date until 1819, except that during the winter, 1812-13, he is mentioned as an inland master at Merry's House. During the period 1814-19 he was employed as accountant and store-keeper at York Factory and subsequently as accountant at Rock Depot until the end of 1821. On 9th September, 1820, he was married at the Rock Depot to Phoebe Sinclair, a half Indian woman, the Rev. John West conducting the

ceremony. He retired to the Red River Settlement in 1822, and died there on 15th January, 1853, when his age is given as 88.

Cameron, Duncan

Duncan Cameron was born at Glenmoriston, Inverness-shire, about 1764, joined the N.W.C. in 1784, and was elected a partner about 1800. After a successful administration in the Nipigon district until 1807, he was at Lake Winnipeg, 1807-11, and at Rainy Lake, 1811-14. In 1814 he was detailed to watch proceedings in the Red River district for the N.W.C. and was put in charge of the Red River Department. In 1816 he was seized by agents of the H.B.C. in the attack on Fort Gibraltar. He was accused of seizing a supply of muskets intended for the defence of the colony and was forcibly conveyed to England. He eventually obtained £3000 damages for his illegal arrest and detention. On returning to Canada about 1820 he settled in the county of Glengarry, which he was elected to represent in the Upper Canada Assembly in 1824. He died at Williamstown on 15th May, 1848.

Campbell, Colin

Colin Campbell was born about 1787 at River Beaudette, Glengarry, Canada, and entered the service of the N.W.C. as a clerk in 1804. He was at Fort Dunvegan on Peace River, 1812-13, was an accountant in Athabaska in 1816, and was on Peace River, 1820-21. At the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821, he joined the service of the former, when he was appointed a clerk and trader to the Athabaska district. Here he appears to have remained for some years. During 1822-24 he was in charge at Fort Vermilion on Peace River, and in the following year he was at Fort Chipewyan. From 1826-28 he was again in charge at Fort Vermilion, being promoted to Chief Trader in the latter year. From 1828-32 he was at Dunvegan, and in the following year was re-appointed to Fort Vermilion. In 1833-34 he was granted a year's furlough, subsequently returning to Dunvegan, where he remained in charge during the next three or four years. In 1838-39 he wintered at Fort Chipewyan, returning to Dunvegan until 1841, when he assumed charge of the Athabaska district with headquarters at Fort Chipewyan, where he remained during the next six years. He was granted leave of absence during 1847-48, and was then given charge of the Kenogamissie district with headquarters at Matawagamingue. There he remained until 1852, when he was granted a year's leave of absence prior to retirement. He died on 9th November, 1853. He married Elizabeth, daughter of the Hon. John McGillivray.

Campbell, John Duncan

John Duncan Campbell was born at Scoharie, New York, on the 21st February, 1773. He is mentioned by Coues in his *New Light* as being in 1799 in the Upper Fort des Prairies and Rocky Mountain department. He became

a partner of the N.W.C. in 1803 and signed the Montreal Agreement of 1804 with the X.Y. Company by attorney. From 1807-09 and from 1810-19 he was stationed in the English River district. In 1819 he was captured by the H.B.C. (with Benjamin Frobisher, Angus Shaw, J. G. McTavish and others) and was subsequently imprisoned for some months. G. C. Davidson in his *North West Company* refers to him as one of the N.W.C. partners who proceeded inland from Fort William in May 1820, including among their members J. G. McTavish, James Leith and Henry Mackenzie. At the union between the two companies he retired from the fur trade and settled in Cornwall, Upper Canada, where he died on 6th May, 1835. Campbell's wife Elizabeth was the daughter of John McDonald of Garth.

Chastellain, Jacques

Jacques Chastellain, a Canadian, entered the H.B.C. service in 1816 in the capacity of clerk. He had formerly been in the service of the N.W.C., and was recruited for the H.B.C. by Robertson. He was employed in 1816-17 at Fort William, in 1817-18 at Cumberland; in the latter year he was transferred to Peace River district, where he was imprisoned at Fort Vermilion in October 1818 by William McIntosh of the N.W.C. He remained in Peace River during 1818-19, and during the winter of 1819-20 he was employed at Fort St. Mary's in that district. In 1820-21 he was at Fort Wedderburn and retired to Montreal in the latter year, his contract having then expired.

Chaurit, François

A Canadian employed by the H.B.C. as a middleman. He joined the Company's service in 1815, and was stationed at Fort Wedderburn from 1818 to 1821.

Clarke, John

John Clarke was born in Montreal in 1781 and entered the service of the N.W.C. as a clerk in 1804. In 1804-05 he was stationed at Fort Vermilion on the Peace River. In 1810 Clarke left the N.W.C. service and joined the Pacific Fur Co. During his term with the Pacific Fur Co. he led the second expedition to Fort Astoria in 1811, and in 1812 established Spokane House on Spokane River in opposition to James McMillan of the N.W.C. At the amalgamation of the N.W.C. with the Pacific Fur Co. Clarke declined to re-enter the N.W.C., and at Colin Robertson's instance he joined the service of the H.B.C. in 1814 at a salary of £400. The H.B.C.'s settlement of Athabaska was mainly due to Clarke, who led the expedition there in 1815 and established Fort Wedderburn during that season. The N.W.C. cut down Clarke's activities in Athabaska by arresting him on 7th October, 1816, on a warrant issued by Archibald Norman McLeod, a N.W.C. partner then in charge of Fort Chipewyan who was a Justice of the Peace for the Indian Territories. Clarke had

been arrested as a disturber of the public peace, but after a few days' imprisonment in Fort Chipewyan he was released. He had, however, been compelled to obtain recognizances for future good behaviour, his surety being Robert Henry, a N.W.C. partner, who had only consented to stand surety for Clarke after receiving from him as a guarantee thirty pieces of goods valued at £3000. Clarke's conduct following his release was unchanged, and on 15th April, 1817, the old charge against him was renewed and he was again arrested on McLeod's warrant. This time his imprisonment was to last longer. After being detained in Fort Chipewyan until June he was removed to Great Slave Lake, where he remained until August. He was then brought back to Athabaska and from there to Ile-à-la-Crosse, where he was released on 12th December, 1817. In 1818-19 Clarke was in charge of St. Mary's, Peace River, from which he was transferred to Ile-à-la-Crosse during the following season. Clarke had been censured by the Committee for not keeping a Journal in 1815: his disasters in 1816-17 made them think that "Mr Clarke did not act with that caution and circumspection which we should have expected his knowledge of the N.W. Co. would have induced him to adopt", and by 1820 Selkirk, Bird, Robertson and Williams were all agreed that Clarke was vain, extravagant and lacking foresight. But he was also courageous, knew Athabaska, hated the N.W.C., and 'seems to command every string that can touch the heart of a Canadian'. They thought that 'He may be very well calculated to force an Establishment in a country where Opposition is violent, and when the Expense at which it is accomplished is not an object of consideration'. Clarke was therefore continued at Ile-à-la-Crosse until 1821. During this period he came into contact with Simpson, who after a short time was able to perceive Clarke's many bad points and did not hesitate to complain about him. In spite of the N.W.C.'s attempt to exclude him from the amalgamated concern, and in spite of Simpson's strong disapproval of him, he became a Chief Factor under the Deed Poll of 1821 and was subsequently granted a year's leave of absence. Along with other Chief Factors he was appointed a Councillor in 1822 and he was once more in active service during 1822-23, when he was given charge of Lower Red River district. His conduct there proved unsatisfactory and was the reason for his removal to Lesser Slave Lake, of which he was in charge from 1824-26. From 1826-30 he was at the head of the Swan River district with headquarters at Fort Pelly, and in 1830 he was again granted one year's leave. He was at the head of Mingan in the Montreal department from 1831-33, though his conduct there was severely censured in 1832. From Mingan he was ordered to proceed into the interior, but by then the H.B.C. Committee was tired of his conduct and his dismissal had been decided on. To prepare the way to his retirement he was granted another year's leave, which was extended to the season ending on 31st May, 1835, when he retired from the H.B.C. His conditions appear to have been far from prosperous, so that in 1848 the H.B.C. allowed him an annuity of £50 in consideration of his past services, to rescue him from utter destitution; the date of Clarke's death is still to be found. Clarke married twice. His first wife was Sapphira, a half-breed daughter of Joseph Spence, on whom he settled

£200 in 1816. After her death Clarke married a Swiss lady, Mary Ann Trutter, in Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal, on 26th October, 1830.

Clouston, Robert

Robert Clouston, an Orkneyman, was born about 1793. He joined the H.B.C. as a blacksmith and sailed from the Orkneys on 23rd June, 1812, in the ship *King George*, which arrived at York Factory on 31st August. In 1813 he is described as at York Factory, and in the two succeeding years he was in the Winnipeg district. In 1815-16 he was at Brandon House; 1816-17 at Swan River, and in 1817-18 at Fort Hibernia. During the years 1818-21 he was employed at Fort Wedderburn in the Athabaska district, being promoted to clerk in the latter year. He took charge of Berens House in April 1821, and subsequently served at Fort Chipewyan until 1828, when he retired to the Red River Settlement. He died on 14th July, 1850.

Cochran. See *Corcoran*

Coltman, William Bachelor

William Bachelor Coltman, a Quebec merchant and a member of the Executive Council of Lower Canada since 1812, was, on 30th October, 1816, appointed a Commissioner to proceed to the Indian territories to hold an enquiry into the events which were disturbing the peace of the Red River Settlement. He was invested with large magisterial powers, and issued a number of arrest warrants. He reported elaborately on the state of affairs as he found them; his report was printed in a blue book entitled *Papers relating to the Red River Settlement* (London, 1819). He died on 2nd January, 1826.

Colvile, Andrew

Andrew Wedderburn, later Andrew Colvile (1779-1856), brother-in-law of Lord Selkirk, was associated with him in his schemes for the settlement at Red River. On Selkirk's death he took over the Trust. He became a member of the H.B.C. Committee in 1810 and exercised great influence in the administration of their affairs; he was chiefly instrumental in securing George Simpson for the service and in bringing about the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. He was Deputy Governor from 1839 to 1852 and Governor from 1852 until his death. He assumed the name of Colvile by Royal Licence in 1814.

Corcoran (Cochrane), Patrick

Patrick Corcoran was a native of Crossmolina, Co. Mayo, in Ireland, and was born about the year 1787. He was one of the original Red River settlers, embarking for York Factory in the ship *Edward and Ann* in 1811 and proceeding to the Colony in summer 1812. He was engaged by the H.B.C. agents at

Montreal in 1819 in the capacity of carpenter and became a clerk at Fort Wedderburn. Brown noted that, although a sober and interested servant, he was 'not a great proficient in the carpenter business'. He remained in Athabaska until 1822, when he retired to Canada, his contract having expired.

Dears, Thomas

Thomas Dears, a native of Hackney, was born in 1797. He entered the H.B.C. service in the capacity of clerk in 1817. He was employed at Cumberland in 1817-18, in 1818-19 at York Factory, and in 1819-20 at Deer Lake. From 1820-22 he was employed in the Lesser Slave Lake district, and in 1822-23 at Island Lake. He was then appointed to the Columbia department. He superintended the erection of Fort Colville in 1825, was a member of Ogden's exploratory journey in the same year, was a clerk at Thompson's River from 1825 to at least 1829, and was at Fraser's Lake in New Caledonia, 1830-31. He remained in New Caledonia from 1831 until he retired to Canada in 1836. During the years 1834-36 he was appointed clerk in charge at Connolly's Lake.

Dejarlois, Antoine (Senior)

A Canadian, born in 1792, engaged by the H.B.C. in 1815. He was Fort Hunter at Colville House, 1818-19, and was employed as an interpreter and stationed at Lesser Slave Lake, 1819-21.

Delonee

There were two Canadians of the name of Delonee in the books of Fort Wedderburn in Simpson's time there. One, Joseph, was engaged as a carpenter; he joined the service in 1816, was at Fort Wedderburn, 1819-21, and was described as 'industrious but difficult to please in regard of provisions'. The other, Louis, was a middleman, engaged in 1815 and serving at Great Slave Lake, 1818-19, and at Harrison's House, 1819-21; a 'very active little man'.

Depuis (or Detour), Louis

A Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1815. From 1818-21 he was serving in the Athabaska district.

Dumain

In 1820-21 there were two men called Dumain in the H.B.C. service in Athabaska. The one most often referred to in the text (cf. pp. 110, 114, 178, 250) is obviously attached to Harrison's House, and would therefore be François Dumain, a Canadian, 'hardy and strong and an excellent middleman' who joined the H.B.C. in 1815, was at Peace River, 1818-19, in Athabaska, 1819-21, and retired to Montreal in 1821. The other man, Michel Dumain, a 'very sober, steady, and obedient man' was also a Canadian middleman. He also

joined the H.B.C. in 1815, was in Athabaska 1818-21, and at Fort Wedderburn 1820-21. He also retired to Montreal in 1821.

Dumoulin, The Rev. J. N. S.

(Cf. Dumoulin, p. 6.) The Reverend Joseph Nicholas Severe Dumoulin was born in Ste. Anne, Island of Montreal, in December 1793, studied at the Seminary of Nicolet, and was ordained in February 1817. He accompanied Bishop Provencher to the Red River Settlement in 1818, and returned to Lower Canada in 1823. His duties carried him as far south as Pembina.

Faries (or Ferris), Hugh

Was born in Montreal and entered the service of the N.W.C. as a clerk in 1804. He was at Rainy Lake, 1804-06 and at Cumberland House, 1812-17. In 1820-21 he was in the New Caledonia district, and at the amalgamation between the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. in 1821 he was appointed a Chief Trader. Cf. Wallace, *Documents relating to the N.W.C.* (Champlain Society), p. 439.

Felix, Michel

A Canadian serving in the H.B.C. as a steersman. He joined the H.B.C. service in 1818, and was at the Red River Settlement from 1818-19. He was at Ile-à-la-Crosse from 1819 to 1821 and went to Montreal in the summer of 1821.

Finlayson, Duncan

Duncan Finlayson, a native of Dingwall in Scotland, was born about 1796. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1815 in the capacity of clerk, and served at Qu'Appelle in 1815-16, at Swan River in 1816-17, at Fort Hibernia 1817-18, at Beaver Creek 1818-19, and in the Red River district 1819-20. He subsequently assumed charge of the Peace River district in 1820, where he acquitted himself to Simpson's satisfaction. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821, he became a clerk in the Saskatchewan district. In 1823-24 he was at Edmonton and was then transferred to Athabaska, where he took charge at Fort Vermilion. In the following year he was granted a year's leave of absence to Europe. On his return in 1826 he was appointed clerk at Fort Garry in the Lower Red River district and in 1828 became a Chief Trader. He remained there until 1831, when he was made a Chief Factor and transferred to Fort Vancouver in the Columbia department, remaining there for three years. In 1834-35 he was granted furlough, and from 1835-37 he remained at Fort Vancouver where he assisted Chief Factor John McLoughlin. During the next two years he was on furlough, and in 1839 he was appointed Governor of Assiniboia and Councillor of Rupert's Land, with headquarters at Fort Garry, where he remained until 1844. For the next ten years he resided almost continuously at Lachine, where he occupied the position of Agent for the H.B.C. He retired in 1855, but was re-appointed to Lachine in 1859: he

finally retired during the same year. He was appointed executor of Sir George Simpson's will and died in London on the 25th July, 1862. Finlayson Lake and River flowing into Frances Lake, Yukon, were named by Robert Campbell of the H.B.C. in his honour.

Forest (Forrest), Grant

Grant Forest came from Montreal, and was born about 1794. In 1820 he was at the Red River Settlement, which he reached in July from Montreal. He brought with him a supply of goods for the Colony, which he was not allowed to barter for furs by Governor Williams, and in 1821 he escorted Col. Dickson to Prairie du Chien. In 1824 he was an accountant at Fort Douglas and on 2nd September of this year he married Mary Allez, a native of Guernsey engaged as schoolmistress at the Red River Settlement. The marriage took place at the Settlement and the ceremony was performed by the Rev. David Jones, then assistant chaplain to the H.B.C. In 1827 Forest was clerk at the H.B.C. post at Lake of Two Mountains.

Franklin, Sir John

(1786-1847). Franklin commanded an overland expedition during the years 1819-22, which proceeded from York Factory by way of Great Slave Lake to the mouth of the Coppermine River and thence eastward along the Arctic coast. He continued his explorations in 1825-27, when he proceeded to the mouth of the Mackenzie River and thence westward along the coast as far as Point Barrow; meantime Richardson, who accompanied him to the mouth of the Mackenzie, surveyed the coast to the eastward as far as the mouth of the Coppermine River. In 1845 Franklin started on his third expedition, by sea, in quest of the North West Passage. His ships, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, were frozen in during the winter 1846-47 between Victoria Land and King William Land, where he died on 11th June, 1847. The story of the subsequent death of all his crews and the discovery of relics by Dr. John Rae in 1854 is too well known to need repetition.

Frinque (or Paul), Jean Baptiste

A Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1819. He was at St. Mary's, Peace River, in 1818-19, in the Athabaska district in 1819-20, and again at St. Mary's, Peace River, in the autumn of 1820. In 1821 he was at Fort Wedderburn.

Frobisher, Benjamin

Benjamin Frobisher, a partner of the N.W.C., was the son of Joseph Frobisher and was born in Montreal in 1782. He entered the service of the N.W.C. in 1799, and during the same year he became a clerk at Lake Winnipeg. In 1804 he was elected a representative for the County of Montreal in the Legislative

Assembly of Lower Canada, and he sat in that capacity until 1808. He was active and aggressive in the struggles between the two companies, and in 1819 he was arrested without warrant by Governor Williams at the Grand Rapids and taken to York Factory. The reason for his arrest was his attempting to rescue prisoners and presenting a loaded pistol at one of the constables with intent to shoot him; he was also 'charged upon oath with Robbery and Burglary, and the very pistol with which he attempted to shoot the constable was part of the property with the robbery of which he was charged'. Frobisher succeeded in escaping, but he died from exhaustion at Cedar Lake while attempting to reach a N.W.C. post. On his death cf. L. R. Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*.

Gagnon, Louis

A Canadian from St. Roch, born in 1797 and employed by the H.B.C. as a middleman in 1820. In 1820-21 he was stationed at Fort Wedderburn. He appears to have been 'not fit for hard work, but willing to do what he can'.

Gale, Samuel

Samuel Gale was born in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1783. He came to Canada with his parents whilst still a child, and later studied law. For many years he was judge of Queen's Bench at Montreal, and he also played a large part in the journalistic controversies of the day. As a barrister and Counsellor at Law he espoused the cause of the H.B.C. and wrote replies to the attacks of the N.W.C. under the pseudonym of 'Nerva'. He died in June, 1865.

Garry, Nicholas

Nicholas Garry was probably an illegitimate son of Nicholas Langley (*d.* 1783) and Isabella Garry, and was born either in 1781 or 1782. In 1817 he became a stockholder and member of the Committee of the H.B.C., and being the only unmarried member of it he volunteered in 1821 to accompany Simon McGillivray to the H.B.C. territory to arrange the details of the amalgamation between the two companies and make a tour of inspection. During this journey Garry kept a diary which is of considerable interest and which was published in 1900 in the proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada. In 1822 he was appointed Deputy Governor of the H.B.C., and either in 1829 or 1830 he married Phoebe Vesey. Garry remained Deputy Governor until 1835, when he became of unsound mind. His insanity proved incurable and he died, still insane, on 24th December, 1856.

Gaudorie, Pierre

A Canadian engaged as a middleman and fisherman. He entered the service of the H.B.C. in 1815 and was in the Athabaska district in 1818-21. 'A good man, either as a voyageur or a fisherman,' wrote William Brown in his Report.

Giasson, Ignace

Ignace Giasson, a former employee of the N.W.C., entered the H.B.C. service in 1818, and during the next four years was employed in the Peace River and Athabaska districts. In the early summer of 1820 he was put in charge of an expedition across the Rocky Mountains to prepare the way for the establishments of H.B.C. posts in New Caledonia. His protracted stay in that country was the cause of much anxiety. He retired to Canada in 1822.

Grant, Cuthbert

Cuthbert Grant, the son of a noted fur trader, was born in 1796. He entered the service of the N.W.C., and in 1815 he was 'appointed Captain General of all the half-breeds in the country'. In the following year he led the attack on the H.B.C. brigade on Assiniboine River, and on 19th June, 1816, he led a party against Fort Douglas which resulted in the Seven Oaks massacre. In 1817 he was arrested by Lord Selkirk, and in 1818 true bills were found against him for murder, larceny and other charges, but as soon as he was admitted to bail he escaped to the interior. He was engaged by the H.B.C. in 1823, but retired from the service in the following year, when he became a settler at the Red River, the view being taken at the time that he would serve a useful purpose at the colony as a settler on account of his great influence with the half-breeds. In 1828 he was appointed by the H.B.C. 'Warden of the Plains' at Red River, his duty in that capacity being to prevent illicit trade in furs within that district. He continued to hold this appointment for about twenty years, during which time he resided at the White Horse Plain, where he had a farm. He took a leading part in the public life of the colony, being successively Justice of the Peace, Councillor of Assiniboia (to which office he was appointed in 1839), Sheriff, President of the Court in White Horse Plain district, and member of the Board of Works. He died at White Horse Plain on 15th July, 1854.

Greill, Joseph

Joseph Greill, a German and late sergeant of the Meurons, joined the H.B.C. service about 1817 in the capacity of clerk. He was employed in the Red River district in 1817-18, and subsequently in Athabaska. He was at Harrisons House during the winter 1819-20, and was in charge of Berens House (Pierre au Calumet) during the winter 1820-21. He retired to Canada in 1822. Brown described him as a 'very steady, careful, interested servant, who is capable of undergoing the Hardships of the country'.

Grignon, Amable

Amable Grignon, a Canadian from Montreal, entered the H.B.C. service in the capacity of clerk, although unable to read or write, in 1817. He was employed in the Upper Red River district in 1817-18, in 1818-19 at Great Slave Lake, at Fort Wedderburn from 1819 to 1821, subsequently remaining at Athabaska until he retired to Canada in 1823.

Grogne, Cayenne (Pierre Leroux, surnamed Kay—Yah or Cayenne)

A Canadian half-breed brought up by the Indians and serving as an interpreter. He was a freeman in 1818-19 and was engaged by the H.B.C. in 1819. He was at Harrisons House, 1819-20; in 1820-21 he was stationed with the Indians attached to Fort Wedderburn.

Guillaume, François

A Frenchman employed as a middleman. He joined the H.B.C. service in 1818, and was at St. Mary's 1818-19, at Berens House 1819-20, and at Fort Wedderburn 1820-21. He was a poor voyageur, but a good stand-by in times of danger, having been formerly in the de Meuron Regiment.

Gunn, Donald

came from Halkirk, and was born in 1797. He joined the service of the H.B.C. in 1813, and in 1818-19 he was assistant trader at Trout Lake; in 1819-20 he held the same position at Winisk River and in 1820-21 at Severn.

Halkett, John

John Halkett was a member of the H.B.C. Committee from 1811 to 1824, and again from 1829 to 1848. In 1815 he married Lady Katherine Douglas, youngest sister of Thomas, fifth Earl of Selkirk, and was later appointed a trustee under Selkirk's will. Shortly after the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. he visited Rupert's Land, where he presided at a temporary council for the Northern department which was held at York Factory in August 1822, under powers which had been previously granted to him by a commission from the Committee in London. He returned to Europe by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales* in the autumn of 1822. He died on 12th November, 1852.

Harper, John

came from Kilmaurs and was engaged by the H.B.C. as a labourer in 1818. He was stationed in Manitoba in 1818-19, in the Athabaska district in 1819-20, and at Peace River in 1820-21.

Henry, Robert

Robert Henry, one of the N.W.C. partners, was born about 1778 and entered the N.W.C. service as a clerk. He was admitted a partner of the N.W.C. in 1810, and was appointed to Upper English River district in 1810, and to the Athabaska district in the four succeeding years. He was one of the officers in Fort Chipewyan when Clarke was made prisoner there in 1815-16, and became Clarke's surety on terms that crippled H.B.C. operations that season. In

1817 he retired from the fur trade and took up banking at Cobourg, Upper Canada, where he died on 10th May, 1859. Henry married Angus Bethune's sister Christine on 2nd November, 1817.

Henry

There must be some doubt as to which of the members of the N.W.C. Simpson refers to as 'Mr. Henry' (p. 24), for there were several members of that name. He probably means William Henry, son of Alexander Henry the elder, of the N.W.C., who joined the N.W.C. as a clerk in 1801. He was in the Red River district, 1801 to 1809; at Cumberland House, 1810; and on the Athabaska River, 1811. He was in the Columbia Department in 1812, and until 1816 was in charge of a post on the Willamette River. He returned to Fort William in 1817, and was then sent to Lesser Slave Lake. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. he remained as a clerk in the Lesser Slave district, but he retired to Canada and became a surveyor in 1823. Simpson may possibly have meant a Robert Henry who was employed by the N.W.C. in Athabaska at this time. He also joined the H.B.C. on the amalgamation, and retired from the service in 1824.

Heron, Francis

Francis Heron was born in Donegal, Ireland, in 1794 and entered the H.B.C. in 1812. He was stationed at York Factory and was Steward at York in 1813, and was Master at Cumberland, 1815-16. From 1817-21 he was a District Master at Edmonton. During 1821-22 he was in Cumberland House district, and in 1823 he was employed on the Bow River or South Branch Expedition. In 1823-24 he was Master at St. John's in the Mackenzie River district. From 1824-28 he was clerk at Fort Garry, in the Red River district, becoming a Chief Trader in 1828. He took charge of Brandon House, on its re-establishment in 1828-29, whence he was transferred to the Columbia department. Here he remained until 1835, being at Fort Colville during most of this period. On 16th July, 1835, he married Isabella Chalifoux at Red River, the Rev. David Jones, Chaplain to H.B.C., officiating. During the same year he returned to Europe on furlough for a year, which was subsequently extended owing to ill-health until his retirement in 1839. He died in April, 1840.

Heron, James

James Heron was a native of County Donegal and Francis Heron's brother. He entered the service of the H.B.C. as a writer in 1812, and was sent to the Winnipeg district. After three years' service he deserted to the N.W.C. in 1815. In 1817 he was at Fort Alexander. After the amalgamation he again joined the H.B.C. and was stationed in the English River Department from 1821 to 1827. He was at Fort Chipewyan from 1828 to 1831. He retired in 1832 but re-entered the Company's service in 1839 and was employed as

Post Master first at Osnaburgh and later at Martin Fall in the Albany River district until 1845, when he again retired. He was still alive in 1857, when he made an unsuccessful application to be re-admitted to the Company's service.

Isbister

There were two men called Isbister at Fort Wedderburn in Simpson's time. Both were Orkney fishermen. The elder, James, was known as Isbister the second. He joined the H.B.C. in 1803, and was at Fort Wedderburn, 1818-21 — 'a very careful interested old man, and a good fisherman.' The younger, Thomas, joined the H.B.C. in 1810, was at Fort Wedderburn 1818-21, and was described as 'a good man, and a good sawer and fisherman'.

Jaudoins, Charles

A Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1818. He was at Berens House 1819-20, and at Ile-à-la-Crosse 1820-21. His contract expired May, 1821.

Johnston, James

James Johnston, a native of Sligo, was born about 1794, and apparently entered the H.B.C. service as a writer in or about 1812. He later became accountant at Ile-à-la-Crosse, where he was killed in an affray which took place there on 4th February, 1815. It appears that one servant of the N.W.C. was killed at the same time.

Keith, George

George Keith was born in Scotland about 1785. He entered the N.W.C. between 1799 and 1806, when he was a clerk in Athabaska. From 1806 to 1815 he was stationed in the Mackenzie River department. He was made a partner of the N.W.C. in 1813, and from 1817 until the union between the two companies he was in charge of the Athabaska department. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he joined the H.B.C. and became a Chief Factor. From 1821-26 he was in charge of the English River district at Ile-à-la-Crosse. He was then granted a year's leave of absence, being appointed on his return to the charge of the Lake Superior district at Michipicoten, where he remained until 1832. He was then granted furlough for one year, and on his return resumed the charge of the Lake Superior district until 1835, when he was transferred to Moose Factory, where he remained during the next three years. After a year's furlough he returned in 1839 to Michipicoten. Here he remained until 1843, when he was then granted furlough for two years prior to his retirement, which took effect from 1st June, 1845. He died at Aberdeen on 22nd January, 1859. He became a Councillor of the Governors of the H.B.C. territories in 1822 and a Councillor of Rupert's Land in 1839.

Keith, James

James Keith was born in 1784. He is believed to have been a younger brother of George Keith. James Keith entered the service of the N.W.C. early in the nineteenth century and became a partner in 1814. From 1813-16 he was in the Columbia department and on the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. he was appointed a Chief Factor. During 1821-22 he was granted a year's leave of absence on account of ill-health. On his return he was placed in charge of the Severn district for a year, subsequently assuming control of the Athabaska district at Fort Chipewyan until 1826. He was then transferred to the Montreal department, where he was superintendent of the H.B.C. affairs at Lachine almost continuously from 1827 until 1843, when he was granted two years' leave prior to his retirement in 1845. He retired to Europe and died at 101 Crown Street, Aberdeen, on 27th January, 1851. He became a Councillor of the Governors of the H.B.C. territories in 1822 and a Councillor of Rupert's Land in 1839. His wife was a sister of Lady Simpson.

Keveny, Owen

Owen Keveny, of Sligo in Ireland, was a leader of a party of Selkirk settlers proceeding from Sligo to York Factory, and subsequently to the Red River Settlement, in 1812. He returned to Europe by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales* in the autumn of 1812. In 1815 he proceeded by the H.B.C. ship *Eddystone* from the Thames to Moose Factory, and was later employed as an accountant in their service. In the following year he surrendered to a warrant which had been signed by a partner of the N.W.C. in which he was accused of maltreating a servant of that Company. Keveny was placed in the charge of Charles de Reinhard, formerly a sergeant in the De Meuron Regiment, who when bringing him down from Lake Winnipeg to Rat Portage, assisted in his murder at the Dalles on the Winnipeg River in September 1816. Reinhard later confessed that he had assisted in the murder, for which he was afterwards tried and convicted at Quebec in 1818; but the sentence was not carried out, probably on account of the uncertainty which existed as to whether the point where the murder occurred was in Upper Canada, Lower Canada or in the Indian territories.

Knipe, Johann Frederick

a former member of the de Meuron Regiment, who joined the H.B.C. in 1816. He was at Lower Red River in 1818-19, and at Fort Wedderburn from 1819-21. He served as a middleman. Knipe retired to the Red River Colony in 1821, and died there in 1822.

Lafontaine, Louis

a Canadian bowsman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1820 and stationed at Harrison's House in 1820-21. He left for Montreal in August 1821, an 'old worn-out man . . . in no shape calculated for the country'.

Lafrenier, Charles

a Canadian employed by the H.B.C. in the capacity of bowsman. He joined the Company's service in 1816. He was at St. Mary's, Peace River, in 1818-19, in Athabaska in 1819-20, and again at Peace River in 1820-21.

Lamallice

Paul Boucher, *dit* Lamallice, a Canadian half-breed, entered the H.B.C. service in 1819 in the capacity of guide at Fort Wedderburn, where he remained until 1821. He was in Athabaska until May, 1822, when it appears that he retired from the service. He and his wife won the hearty dislike of William Brown during his command at Fort Wedderburn, though he admitted that Lamallice was an excellent guide.

Larocque, Joseph Felix

Joseph Felix Larocque entered the service of the N.W.C. at the age of fourteen, some years before the close of the eighteenth century. He is mentioned as a clerk at English River in 1804, and at Fort des Prairies in 1806. In 1813 he participated in the transaction which led to the transfer of Astoria to the N.W.C. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. he entered the service of the former in the capacity of Chief Trader. He was at first appointed to English River district, and in the following year he was given charge of Rocky Mountain House on the North Saskatchewan River. In July 1823 he was appointed to take charge at McLeod's Branch (Lesser Slave Lake district), and received instructions to pass the ensuing winter at Cranberry Lake. Simpson, on his return journey from Columbia in April 1825, found Larocque in charge at Rocky Mountain House near the source of the Athabaska River. Later in the same year he was transferred to the Montreal department, and spent the following winter at the Company's establishment of Portneuf. In 1827 he was in charge at Mingan, where he still remained in 1830. He retired from the service in 1831, and passed the rest of his days, partly in France and partly at Ottawa, where it appears that he died in 1866. He was a younger brother of Francis Antoine Larocque of the N.W.C., who led the Mandan Expedition in 1804.

Laserte

In 1820-21 there were three men named Laserte at Fort Wedderburn. John Laserte was a Canadian middleman who joined the H.B.C. in 1815, and was fined by Simpson for insolence (cf. p. 53); he was classified as 'a lazy and careless' man, who could speak a little Cree. Louis Laserte was a Canadian steersman who joined in 1816 and was at Fort Wedderburn 1819-21—a 'grumbling fellow, who does his duty well'—and Pierre Laserte was a Canadian middleman who also joined in 1816, and was at Fort Wedderburn 1819-21. He was described as a good voyageur.

Leith, James

James Leith was born in Aberdeenshire in 1777. In 1798 he entered the service of the X.Y. Company and became one of its six wintering partners who were absorbed as partners by the N.W.C. in 1804. He was at Folle Avoine 1806-07, Michipicoten 1807-10, Rainy Lake 1810-11, Red River 1811-12, Monontague and Lake Nipigon 1812-15, and Rainy Lake 1816. In 1817 he went to Red River to arrest some of Selkirk's men. He was made a Chief Factor at the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 and appointed to the Athabaska district. In the following year went to Cumberland House, where he remained in charge until 1829. He took a deep philanthropic interest in the Indians, and in his will left half his estate for the propagation of the Protestant religion among them. He retired in 1831, though his active connection with the H.B.C. ceased when he returned to England in 1829, as he suffered from ill-health during the following two years. He died at Torquay on 19th June, 1838.

Lewes, John Lee

John Lee Lewes (or Lewis), of the parish of St. George's, Southwark, was born in 1791. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1807 as a writer at Churchill Factory, where he remained until 1809. He was at Nelson House, 1809-10, and at Deer's Lake in the following year. He was at Cumberland House from 1812 to 1814, and is mentioned as being at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1814-15. He was stationed at Slave Lake in 1815-16 and at Lesser Slave Lake during the five succeeding years. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he became a Chief Trader in the Columbia department. In 1823 he was transferred to the Cumberland district, where he was appointed in charge of Moose Lake Post. He remained in the Cumberland district until 1826, when he returned to Europe on leave of absence. On his return in 1827 he was appointed to Moose Factory. In the autumn of 1827 Lewes received instructions from Governor Simpson to proceed by sea from Moose Factory in the summer of 1828 with the object of forming an establishment near the mouth of South River in Ungava and also for the purpose of exploring the country inland from that point. He was unable to carry out these instructions on account of the *Union* sloop, which had been set aside for this expedition, proving unseaworthy. In 1829 Lewes assumed control at Cumberland House, and in the following year he was given charge of the Island Lake district with headquarters at Oxford House. Whilst he was there he was entrusted with the arrangements for the construction of the Winter Road from York Factory to Lake Winnipeg, which had been commenced by Colin Robertson in 1828. He remained at Island Lake until 1835, with the exception of a few months in 1834, when he took charge at Churchill. He proceeded to Europe on furlough during 1835-36. From 1837-40 he was in charge at Cumberland House, and subsequently at Fort Simpson (Mackenzie River district) until 1844, when he was allowed one year's leave of absence for the benefit of his health. From 1845-47 he was in

charge at Fort Colville in the Columbia district and was then granted leave of absence. From 1849-51 he assumed control at Cumberland, and was subsequently granted furlough prior to his retirement from the service in 1853. He spent his last years at St. Andrew's, Manitoba. Lewes was promoted Chief Factor in 1830 and was appointed a Councillor of Rupert's Land in 1839. The Lewis River, Yukon, was so named by Robert Campbell in 1843 in compliment to him while he was Chief Factor in charge of the Mackenzie River district. Thomas Simpson, the Arctic explorer, in 1836 describes Lewes as 'a fine honorable Englishman'.

Linton, George

George Linton was an Englishman and was born in 1800. He joined the service of the N.W.C. as an apprentice clerk in 1819 and was stationed in the Athabaska department. At the amalgamation between the two companies he entered the service of the H.B.C. as a clerk and remained in Athabaska during 1821-23. In 1824-25 he was clerk at Fort Pelly and from 1826 to 1828 at Edmonton. In 1829 he was appointed in charge of Fort Assiniboine, and in 1830 he was in charge of Lesser Slave Lake. From 1831 to 1833 he was a clerk in the New Caledonia district, and in 1834-35 he was in charge of Fort George, New Caledonia. He was drowned with his family and others on 8th November, 1835, while passing the rapids between Fort George and Alexandria.

Livingstone, Duncan

Duncan Livingstone joined the N.W.C. in 1819, and was sent into Athabaska as a constable to annoy the servants of the H.B.C. In 1820 Colin Robertson wrote to Governor Williams that he had just heard that 'Levinston' had been sent into Athabaska to play the great man, or Sheriff's Officer, and Livingstone spent winter 1820-21 at Ile-à-la-Crosse. After the amalgamation of 1821 he was employed by the H.B.C. in New Caledonia and Columbia. He deserted with some of the Company's property in May, 1824, but returned, lame and penitent, in February, 1825, and was taken on as a labourer, with the duty of serving as interpreter when required. He remained in the Company's employ in Columbia until, at the age of thirty, he was murdered by Indians in April, 1828.

McAulay, Aulay

A former employee of the N.W.C., was recruited for the H.B.C. Athabaska expedition by Colin Robertson in 1815. He had formerly committed some depredations against the H.B.C. on behalf of the N.W.C., and Selkirk was averse to employing him until he had turned King's evidence and cleared himself before a magistrate. McAulay was none the less employed, being 'a man of great resolution and rough manners', then about forty years of age and, as he confessed, 'not very well versed in Book keeping myself'. He made unsuccessful attempts to establish Great Slave Lake on behalf of the H.B.C. in 1816 and 1817, was at Great Slave Lake 1818-19, was left in charge at Fort Wedderburn in the summer of 1819, and completed the rebuilding of the Fort. In the

autumn of 1819 he failed disastrously at Berens House and had to surrender his goods to the N.W.C. He was again at Great Slave Lake 1820-21, and subsequently served in Athabaska until 1823, when he retired to Canada.

McBean, John

John McBean was a clerk and interpreter in the service of the N.W.C. at Fond du Lac in 1804, and a partner at Fort William in 1816. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he was made a Chief Factor; he was appointed to the charge of Lake Huron district, with headquarters at La Cloche, where he remained until he retired in 1837.

McBean, William Scott

William Scott McBean, a native of Cromarty, Scotland, entered the H.B.C. service as a clerk in 1818. He was employed at Rock Depot, 1818-19, at Fort St. Mary's, 1819-20, and at Colville House, Peace River, 1820-21. During the period 1821-26 he was employed as a clerk and trader in New Caledonia, and in 1825 he was appointed with George McDougall (clerk) in charge of Alexandria in the New Caledonia district. He retired to Europe in 1826.

McDonald, Alexander

Alexander McDonald was born about the year 1782, and appears to have joined the H.B.C. about 1817. He served in Athabaska between 1818 and 1821 and has left a complete account (in his letters to James Bird) of the Athabaska expedition of 1818, with details of the capture of Colin Robertson. He was in charge of Fort Wedderburn 1819-20, and was severely criticised by all with whom he came into contact. During this time, however, he was in great ill-health, and in 1821 he was allowed to pass the winter at Montreal. He became a Chief Trader in 1821, and was subsequently employed in the St. Maurice district of the Montreal department. He retired in 1828.

McDonald, Archibald

Archibald McDonald, a native of Argyllshire, Scotland, born 3rd February, 1790, was engaged for the H.B.C. service by Lord Selkirk in 1812, and prior to leaving Scotland was employed to recruit clerks and servants for the Company. He sailed for Hudson Bay in the summer of 1813 by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales*. After spending the winter at Churchill he proceeded to the Red River Settlement in the spring of 1814. In 1815 he wrote a 'Narrative respecting the destruction of the Earl of Selkirk's Settlement upon Red River in the year 1815', which is in manuscript in the Selkirk collection (Dominion Archives, Ottawa). He was present at the capture of Fort William by Lord Selkirk on 13th August, 1816. It appears that he remained at the Red River Colony until 1820, when he became a clerk at Ile-à-la-Crosse. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821, McDonald proceeded to Fort George

in the Columbia where he was employed as accountant during the next five years. He succeeded Chief Factor John McLeod as officer in charge at Kamloops (Thompson's River) during 1826-27. He is perhaps best known as the chronicler of Simpson's expedition to New Caledonia in 1828, during which he kept a journal, part of which was edited by M. McLeod in 1872. He accompanied Simpson on this expedition from York Factory (12th July) as far as Fort Langley, which was reached three months later—on 10th October, 1828. In 1828 he was appointed Chief Trader in the Columbia district, and was in charge at Fort Langley from 1828 to 1833, and apparently at Fort Colville, Columbia department, 1833-34. During the next year he was granted furlough, and was in charge at Fort Colville during the period 1835-44, although from one of his letters published in the *Washington Historical Quarterly*, vol. 2, p. 254, it would appear that he did not take active charge of Fort Colville until 1836. He was made a Chief Factor in December 1841. In the winter of 1844-45 he was granted leave of absence on account of ill-health, when he passed the time at Fort Edmonton. In the following year he availed himself of his rotation of furlough and was subsequently granted a further two years' furlough prior to his retirement in 1848. He retired to Argenteuil in Canada, and died on 15th January, 1853.

McDonald, John

was born in 1770 in Inverness-shire and emigrated in 1786. After serving for some years as a clerk, he became a partner in the X.Y. Company in 1798, and in 1804 became a partner of the North West Company. In 1816 he was arrested at Fort William by Lord Selkirk and was acquitted on his trial at Toronto. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. he became a Chief Factor and was given charge of Upper Red River. From 1823 to 1827 he was in charge of the Winnipeg River district, with headquarters at Fort Alexander. He was given a year's furlough in 1827 and died on leave, on 8th February, 1828. In distinction from John McDonald of Garth he was known as McDonald le Borgne, was called 'One-eyed McDonald' by Colin Robertson, and is possibly the 'White-head McDonald' to whom Simpson refers (*supra*, p. 21). Letters of administration for his estate are filed in the H.B.C. list of servants' wills, where he is described as 'John McDonald, late of York Factory', his brother Finan McDonald being his executor.

McDonald, John

John McDonald (of Garth) was a distinguished partner of the N.W.C. Born in Scotland about 1774, in 1791 he went to Canada as an apprentice clerk of this Company and was sent immediately to the North West territories. In 1799 he built Rocky Mountain House, and in 1800 he became a partner of the N.W.C. He was in charge of Fort des Prairies from 1806-08, and in 1807 he established Fort Gibraltar at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. From 1809 to 1811 he was stationed at Upper Red River, but he appears to have wintered in the Rocky Mountains with John George McTavish in 1809-10

or 1810-11 or both, and he moved from there to Columbia, where he was in 1811-12 and 1813-14, and where he took part in the relief of David Thompson in 1811. Astoria was surrendered to him in 1813, and in 1815 he retired to Gray's Creek, Glengarry, Upper Canada. John McDonald was the brother-in-law of William McGillivray.

McDonald, Neil

Neil McDonald, a native of Scotland, was born about 1794. He entered the H.B.C. service as a labourer in 1813, being first employed at Trout Lake, Severn district, where he remained until 1818. He was later employed as a middleman in Athabaska from 1818-23, during part of which time he was stationed at Great Slave Lake. He was promoted to the rank of clerk in 1821. He subsequently retired to Europe, sailing from York Factory by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales* in the autumn of 1823.

McDougald, George (also written McDougall)

described by Simpson (p. 274) as 'formerly a Clerk in the Honble. H.B. Coys Service', was a N.W.C. clerk serving in New Caledonia, 1820-21. He had gone out to Peace River in 1815 as a clerk in the H.B.C. service, but had joined the N.W.C. (in which his brother James was a clerk) in 1816. He became a clerk in the H.B.C. once more in 1821 and remained in the New Caledonia district until 1830. He was then appointed in charge of Great Slave Lake, and in the next year was transferred to Lesser Slave Lake, where he remained in charge from 1831 to 1846. In 1846-47 he was in charge at Rocky Mountain House, but in 1847 he returned to Lesser Slave Lake and remained in charge there until 1849, when he retired. He appears never to have been promoted above the rank of clerk.

McDougald, John

John McDougald (or McDougall) of Kilmonivaig, Scotland, was born about 1791. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1813 in the capacity of labourer. He was employed at Churchill from 1813 to 1815, and in the following year he was mentioned as a middleman at Paint River, where he appears to have been stationed until 1819. He was later promoted in rank, becoming an Assistant Trader at Norway House during the winter 1819-20, and at Harrison's House in 1820-21. He subsequently remained in Athabaska until 1823, when he retired to Europe, sailing from York Factory in the autumn of that year by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales*, though his contract did not expire until 1st May, 1824.

McGillivray, Joseph

Joseph McGillivray, a son of the Hon. William McGillivray, a lieutenant in the Canadian Chasseurs, was present at the taking of Michillimackinac in 1812.

A partner of the N.W.C. in 1813, he was in the Columbia district from 1813 to 1817. In 1817 he was at Fort William, but he probably returned to the Columbia. At the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he was made a Chief Trader. He was at Vermilion, 1821-22 and at Norway House, 1822-23. In 1823 he was appointed to York Factory, and in July 1824 he was granted leave of absence for a year for the benefit of his health. In 1825-26 he was appointed in charge of Trout Lake (Severn district), and from 1826-28 he was in the New Caledonia district—mainly at Alexandria. In 1828-29 he was on furlough, in 1829-30 he was appointed to Fort Good Hope, and in 1830-31 he was at Split Lake. He retired in 1831 and died at Montreal on 22nd April, 1832.

McGillivray, Simon (Senior)

a brother of Hon. William McGillivray, was born in Inverness-shire in 1783. He became a partner in the London firm of McTavish, Fraser and Co. in 1805. In 1813 he became a partner of the Montreal firm of McTavish, McGillivrays and Co., and played an important part in bringing about the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and the N.W.C. in 1821. In 1822 he became a member of the firm of McGillivrays, Thain and Co., and in 1824 he accepted stock in the H.B.C. in lieu of his rights. McGillivrays, Thain and Co. went bankrupt in 1825 and Simon McGillivray retired from the fur trade. He was never an active fur trader owing to the fact that he was lame.

McGillivray, Simon (Junior)

Simon McGillivray, Junior, was a son of the Hon. William McGillivray and was born in 1790. He served with the Canadian Chasseurs in 1812, and became a clerk of the N.W.C. in 1813. He was stationed in the Columbia district for some years and was then in Athabaska for a number of years, and was still there, 1820-21. He should not be confused with Simon McGillivray, Senior, one of the leading partners of the N.W.C. at the time of the amalgamation with the H.B.C. On the amalgamation Simon McGillivray, Junior, became a Chief Trader in the service of the H.B.C. During 1821-22 he was granted leave of absence on account of indifferent health. After spending the summer of 1822 at Fort William, he was appointed to the Lac La Pluie (Rainy Lake) district, where he remained during the next three years. From 1825 to 1827 he was in charge of the Severn district, and was then transferred to Fort Resolution, Great Slave Lake, where he remained until 1830. During 1831 and 1832 he took charge at Fort Nez Percés, and later he was stationed in the New Caledonia district until his retirement in 1834. In June 1833 he undertook a voyage by land from Fort St. James in a north-west direction to Simpson's River. He re-entered the H.B.C. service in the capacity of a clerk in 1836, when he was appointed to establish the Esquimaux Bay district, where he remained until 1838. He again became a Chief Trader in 1837 and was later in charge of Chicoutimi on the Saguenay River. He died on 14th June, 1840.

McGillivray, William

The Honourable William McGillivray, nephew of Simon McTavish, was born in Scotland in 1764. In 1784 he joined the N.W.C. as a clerk. In 1785-86 he was stationed in the Red River department, and in 1786-88 he was in charge of the post at Lac des Serpents. In 1790 he became a partner of the N.W.C., and three years later a member of the firm of McTavish, Frobisher & Co. At Simon McTavish's death in 1804 he succeeded him as Chief Director of the N.W.C., and Fort William was named after him in 1807. In the War of 1812 he served as Lieutenant-Colonel of the Canadian Voyageurs and took part in the capture of Detroit. In 1814 he was created a Legislative Councillor for Lower Canada. He was responsible for the N.W.C. policy towards Lord Selkirk, by whom he was arrested in 1816 at Fort William and sent to Canada for trial. He left Canada for Scotland before the amalgamation between the H.B.C. and the N.W.C., which he helped to negotiate with his brother Simon. He retired to Argyllshire but died in St. John's Wood, London, on 16th October, 1825. McGillivray married in 1800 Magdeline (*d.* 1810) the sister of John McDonald of Garth.

McIntosh (McIntoch), William

William McIntosh was born in 1784 at Grand Rapids, entered the service of the N.W.C., and was stationed at Lesser Slave Lake in 1803. In 1805 he was moved to the Peace River; in 1815 he successfully defended Fort Vermilion against the H.B.C. men led by John Clarke. He was made a partner of the N.W.C. in 1816, and in 1819 he was arrested, with other N.W.C. partners, by Governor Williams. He managed to escape shortly afterwards, returning to the Athabaska district. He was made a Chief Trader in 1821 on the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C., and a Chief Factor in 1823. He served at Dunvegan from 1821 to 1824, in the Athabaska River district 1824-25; he was in charge of Nelson House from 1825 to 1829, of Cumberland House 1829-32, and of Dunvegan 1832-34. In October 1834 he was obliged to leave Dunvegan on account of ill-health and was subsequently granted furlough for the years 1835 and 1836, though his official retirement did not take place until 1st June, 1837. McIntosh died on 16th February, 1842.

Mackenzie, Sir Alexander

Alexander Mackenzie entered the counting house of Finlay, Gregory & Co. (later Gregory, McLeod & Co.,) about the year 1780, and five years later was admitted a partner in that concern. On the union of that firm with the N.W.C. in 1787, Mackenzie was placed in charge of Fort Athabaska, and in 1788 removed his headquarters to Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabaska. Leaving his cousin, Roderick McKenzie, in charge of affairs there, he set out on 3rd June, 1789, on his famous journey northwards to the Arctic Ocean, and reached the mouth of the river which bears his name. He returned to Fort Chipewyan on 12th September of the same year. He subsequently proceeded to England

in order to educate himself in astronomy and navigation, having found that his lack of knowledge in these matters had proved a severe handicap to him on his journey to the Arctic. When he had attained proficiency, he returned to Fort Chipewyan, and on 10th October, 1792, left on a further journey of discovery. After passing the winter at a fort which he had erected near the junction of the Peace and Smoky Rivers, he recommenced his journey on 9th May, 1793. Proceeding to near the source of the Parsnip River, he crossed the height of land to the Fraser River, which he followed as far as the place where Fort Alexander was later established. He then retraced his steps a short way up the Fraser River to what was known as the 'West Road River' and thence proceeded overland to the tide-water of the Pacific, which was reached on 2nd July, 1793, at a point near Bella Coola, on the North Bentinck Arm, about $52^{\circ} 30'$ north latitude. He was thus the first European to penetrate the Rocky Mountains and to reach the shores of the Pacific overland from Canada. Mackenzie afterwards retraced his steps to Fort Chipewyan, which was reached after an absence of about eleven months. In 1799 he severed his connection with the N.W.C. and returned to England, where he published in 1801 his *Voyages through the Continent of North America*. Mackenzie was knighted in 1802, and on his return to North America in the same year became the predominant partner in the recently established concern known as the New North West or X.Y. Company. On the union between the X.Y. and N.W.C., which took place in 1804, Mackenzie once more became a partner of the latter. He subsequently resided at Montreal, where he took an active part in the public life of the place and in the affairs of Lower Canada. In 1808 he finally left Canada for Scotland, where he resided until his death on 12th March, 1820.

McKenzie, Henry

Henry McKenzie was a brother of the Hon. Roderick McKenzie and was born in Scotland about 1781 and came to Canada about 1800. In 1803 he was at Kaministiquia (Fort William). When Sir Alexander Mackenzie returned to Europe in 1808 he was put in charge of his affairs in Canada, and in 1814 he entered the association known as McTavish, McGillivrays & Company, which, together with the firm of Sir Alexander Mackenzie & Company, had been appointed co-agents for the N.W.C., and during the Selkirk controversy he was put in charge of the publicity campaign. After the amalgamation between the two companies, his relations with his partners in the firm of McTavish, McGillivrays & Co. became strained, and after their failure he published a letter to Simon McGillivray (Montreal 1827) in which he showed his relations with the firm. In 1815 he married Anne Bethune, youngest sister of Angus Bethune. He died of cholera on 28th June, 1832.

Mackenzie, Roderick (Senior)

There is little reliable information available as to the early years of Roderick Mackenzie (Senior). His father was buried—and he paid for the tombstone—at Inverassint, Sutherland. He joined the N.W.C. as a clerk at the end of

the eighteenth century, was in the Nipigon district 1804-08, and was in opposition to the H.B.C. at Attawapiskat Lake 1814-15. In 1817 he was at Fort William, and was then nearly fifty years old. At the amalgamation of 1821, Mackenzie was made a Chief Trader and was given charge of the Nipigon district. From here he was moved to the post at Pic, Lake Superior, 1824-25, and was appointed to Fort William in 1825. Here he remained until 1830, when he was made Chief Factor and given charge of the English River district, to reside at Ile-à-la-Crosse. He remained in charge there until 1850, when he was given two successive years of furlough and retired in June, 1852. He ultimately retired to the Red River Settlement, where he died on 2nd January, 1859, aged eighty-seven. He had a numerous family, of whom at least three sons, Alexander, Benjamin and Roderick, were employed by the H.B.C.

McKenzie, Roderick (Junior)

Roderick McKenzie (Junior), a native of Gaerloch in Ross-shire, was born in 1791 and entered the H.B.C. service in 1811 as an apprentice clerk. He is described as a writer in the East Winnipeg district, 1812-13, and in the Winnipeg district in the following year. He was at Red River, 1814-15, and joined the Athabaska Expedition under John Clarke at Jack River, in July, 1815. He was present when Fort Wedderburn was established in the ensuing autumn, remaining there during the next two years. His conduct there won him a gratuity of £50 from the H.B.C. Committee. He was at Ile-à-la-Crosse, 1817-18, afterwards proceeding to Montreal, where he was required to give evidence regarding the atrocities committed by the N.W.C. in Athabaska during his term of office there. On his return from Montreal in 1819 he became District Master at Lac la Pluie, where he remained until 1822. He then assumed control of the Winnipeg River district at Fort Alexander (Bas de la Rivière). In 1823 he was appointed in charge of the Churchill district. He was then transferred to the Nelson River district, being in charge at the Split Lake, 1824-25. He was thereafter employed in the Montreal department, where he assumed control at Portneuf in the Mille Vaches district. He died at Portneuf on 10th January, 1830. He was appointed a Chief Trader under the Deed Poll in 1821, and should not be confused with Roderick McKenzie (Senior) who was in the service of the N.W.C. prior to 1821, and who also became a Chief Trader under the Deed Poll.

McKenzie, Roderick

The Honourable Roderick McKenzie was a cousin of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. He retired from the fur trade in 1801, but is important as the founder of Fort Chipewyan in 1788. Cf. W. S. Wallace, *Documents relating to the North West Company*, pp. 478-9.

McLeod, Archibald Norman

Archibald Norman McLeod was an influential partner in the N.W.C. His name appears as clerk in their service in 1797, and he was already a partner

before 1799. From 1802 to 1808 he was in Athabaska, and in 1808 he became a partner of McTavish, McGillivrays & Co., and in the next year he retired as wintering partner of the N.W.C. He signed the agreements within the Company in 1802 and 1804, and Simon Fraser named McLeod Lake in his honour in 1805, when he was proprietor at Fort Dauphin. He was a Magistrate for the Indian Territory and was to a large extent responsible for the attack upon the Red River Colony in June 1816. In May 1817, in his capacity as a Magistrate, he extorted an oath from a number of the H.B.C. servants that they would not return to trade in Athabaska for the space of two years, nor take up arms against the N.W.C., and he also captured Fort Wedderburn in June 1817. He withdrew at the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821. In 1826 he was living in Aberdeenshire, and in 1837 he was barrack-master at Belfast, Ireland. His death must have occurred between 1837 and 1845.

McLeod, John

There were at least two John McLeods who were clerks in the N.W.C. at the time of the amalgamation with the H.B.C. in 1821. The first entered the N.W.C. service in 1816, and on the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 became a clerk in the service of the former. During the next three years he was employed in the Swan River district, being appointed in 1822 to assist Goulait in the management of the new post at Rivière au Capot in that district. He retired to Canada in 1824.

The other John McLeod also entered the service of the N.W.C. in 1816 and served as a clerk on the Churchill River. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. he was appointed as a clerk at Ile-à-la-Crosse. In the autumn of 1822 he accompanied Governor Simpson on his journey from York Factory to the interior as far as Fort Chipewyan, which was reached on 1st December. On 16th January, 1823, McLeod resumed his journey to Fort Simpson at the forks of the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers, where he arrived on 22nd February. On the ensuing 5th June he left Fort Simpson accompanied by a small party with the intention of visiting the Nahanni Indians. Proceeding *via* the Liard and South Nahanni Rivers early in July, he fell in with a party of friendly Indians. After five weeks' absence he returned to Fort Simpson on 10th July, and in June 1824 he again visited the Nahanni Lands and persuaded an Indian Chief to accompany him to the Fort. He remained in the Mackenzie River district for several years, and in 1831 took charge of an expedition from Fort Simpson for the purpose of exploring the West Branch of the Liard River. He was later appointed in charge at Fort Halkett during 1832-34 and of the post at Liard River in 1834-35. In 1835 he was transferred to the Columbia district, where he remained until 1840, when he was granted furlough for two years prior to his retirement in 1842. He was promoted Chief Trader in 1834.

McLeod, John

John McLeod of Ross entered the H.B.C. service as a writer in April 1811; in 1813-14 he is described as a 'Writer' in the Winnipeg district, and in the

following year as a 'Trader' at Pembina in the same district. In 1815-16 he was at Turtle River Post and also at Fort Douglas (which he was called upon to defend against the N.W.C.). In 1816-17 he was in charge at Ile-à-la-Crosse, where he was twice made a prisoner by the N.W.C. He afterwards proceeded to Montreal to give evidence against that Company, returning to Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1819. Here he remained until 1821, when he became a Chief Trader under the Deed Poll. He subsequently remained at Ile-à-la-Crosse (English River district) until he was transferred in 1822 to the Columbia department, where he was in charge at Kamloops (Thompson River district) until 1825, when he was granted furlough for one year. From 1826-30 he was at Norway House; he was on leave of absence to Europe in 1830-31, and was then appointed to the Montreal department, where he was in charge of the St. Maurice district from 1833 until his death in 1849. He should not be confused with the other John McLeod who served in the Mackenzie River and Columbia districts, being a Chief Trader from 1834-42.

McMurray, Thomas

According to one of Peter Fidler's Journals, Thomas McMurray came to the country in 1790. He entered the service of the X.Y. Company, and in 1803-04 was in charge of Fort Dauphin. When the X.Y. Company amalgamated with the N.W.C. he joined the service of the N.W.C., and was at Rainy Lake in 1804, and at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1817. He was made a partner of the N.W.C. in 1817. In 1820 he was arrested on charges arising out of his misdeeds in Athabaska and taken to Montreal. All proceedings in this and other similar cases were quashed at the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C., when he became a Chief Trader and was given charge of Winnipeg River in 1821. In 1823 he was appointed to Fort Dauphin, and in 1824 to Lac la Pluie district, where he was in charge at Whitefish Lake during 1824-25, and subsequently at Lake of the Woods until 1831. He was then removed to Pic, Lake Superior district, where he remained almost continuously (but for outfit 1836-37 for which he obtained leave of absence) until 1841. He was granted leave of absence during two years prior to his retirement, which dated from 1st June, 1843. He died in Cramahé, Upper Canada, on 15th January, 1849.

McTavish, John George

John George McTavish entered the N.W.C. as a clerk about 1798. In 1802 he was at Grand Portage and in 1808 he left Fort William for the west in company with Daniel Harmon. According to an N.W.C. Minute Book he was appointed to the Columbia district for the year 1812-13. Elliott Coues states in his *New Light* (New York, 1897), that McTavish wintered in 1808-09 at Fort Dunvegan on the Peace River, leaving on 11th May, 1809, for Fort William. He apparently accompanied John McDonald of Garth to the Rocky Mountains, when he wintered in 1809-10 or 1810-11 or both. He was at Fort William in 1812, and in the following year proceeded to Astoria, where he participated in the transfer of that place from the Pacific Fur Company to the

N.W.C. In the same year he was made a partner of the N.W.C. During the next few years he appears to have been employed mainly in the Columbia district. He is found, in August 1817, with J. Thompson, on the Kaministiquia route from Fort William to the interior, and was one of those arrested at the Grand Rapids in 1819 by Governor William Williams of the H.B.C. In England, where he was went to stand trial, he was liberated for want of a prosecutor. He returned to North America in March 1820, when he was a fellow-passenger with George Simpson on the *James Munroe* from Liverpool to New York. McTavish was later one of a party proceeding from Fort William to the interior in May 1820. In the summer of 1820 he was in charge of a party of N.W.C. men who arrested Colin Robertson at the Grand Rapids. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821, McTavish became a Chief Factor in the service of the former company. During Simpson's absence in 1824-25 he acted as Deputy Governor of the Northern Department. He was first in charge at York Factory, where he remained until 1829, when he was granted furlough. He returned in 1830, and was then appointed to Moose Factory, where he assumed control during the ensuing five years. He was again granted leave of absence during 1835-36, and was subsequently given charge of the Lake of the Two Mountains district in the Montreal department, where he was in charge almost continuously until his death on 20th July, 1847. His personal correspondence with Governor Simpson from 1830 to 1836 indicates a close intimacy between them. He became a Councillor of the Governors of the H.B.C. territories in 1822 and a Councillor of Rupert's Land in 1839.

McVicar, Robert

Robert McVicar, a native of Bowmore, Ireland, was born about 1794. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1812, and was a writer at York Factory until 1814. In 1814-15 he is mentioned as being at Cumberland House, where he was in opposition to John Duncan Campbell of the N.W.C. He was at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1815-16, and there fought a duel with a N.W.C. clerk, McNeal. He was next transferred to the Athabaska district, where he remained until 1819. During his term of office there he was imprisoned by the N.W.C. at Fort Chipewyan, in October 1816 and again in April 1817. He was in charge at Fort Resolution in the Great Slave Lake district from 1819 to 1823, when he obtained a year's leave of absence. He resumed the charge of Great Slave Lake from 1824 to 1827, being then transferred to Weymontachingue in the St. Maurice district of the Montreal department until 1830, when he retired. He was appointed Chief Trader under the Deed Poll in 1821.

McVicar, Walter

Walter McVicar, a brother of Robert McVicar, entered the service of the N.W.C. as clerk in 1820, becoming a servant of the H.B.C. at the amalgamation of the two companies in 1821. He was then appointed to the Athabaska district, where he remained until his retirement to Canada in 1823.

Magnion, J. Baptiste

J. Baptiste Magnion entered the H.B.C. service in 1815 and retired to Montreal in 1821. He was employed as a guide in the Athabaska and Peace River districts.

Manson, Donald

Donald Manson, a native of Thurso in Caithness, was born in 1798 and entered the service of the H.B.C. in 1817. He served first at the Rock Depot and subsequently at Oxford House until 1819, when he was transferred to Île-à-la-Crosse, in the English River district, where he remained during the next three years. In 1822-23 he was a member of the Bow River or South Saskatchewan Expedition, which proceeded under Chief Factor Donald McKenzie and Chief Trader Francis Heron, and in the summer of 1824 he accompanied Chief Trader Samuel Black on his exploratory expedition to Finlay River. He became a clerk in the Columbia district, where he accompanied Chief Factor James McMillan when he formed the establishment of Fort Langley in the summer of 1827. In 1829 he was appointed clerk at Fort Vancouver; here he remained until, in 1831, he went to Fort Simpson at the mouth of the Nass River, where he remained until 1834. Whilst at Fort Simpson he undertook a voyage up the Nass River in September, 1832, and a month later a similar voyage up the Skeena River. He was in charge at Fort McLoughlin 1834-39, and was then granted leave of absence to Europe. He was introduced to the H.B.C. Committee in London on 21st October, 1840. On his return in 1841 he was re-appointed to the Columbia department, where he served first in the Thompson's River district during 1841-42, and later at Stikine in the following year. In 1844 he succeeded Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden in charge of the New Caledonia district at Stuart's Lake, where he remained until 1857. He was then granted leave of absence prior to his retirement in 1858. He was made a Chief Trader in 1837 and never rose above that rank.

Maroy, Pierre

A Canadian steersman, Maroy entered the H.B.C.'s service in 1816. He was at St. Mary's, Peace River, 1818-19, in the Athabaska district, 1819-20, and again at St. Mary's, 1820-21.

Martin, Louis

a Canadian steersman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1820 and stationed at Fort Wedderburn 1820-21.

Masta, Raymond

was probably a half-breed and was born in 1785. In 1815 he joined the H.B.C. service as an interpreter, and in 1818-19 he was stationed at Great

Slave Lake. In 1819-20 he was in the Athabaska district and in 1820-21 again at Great Slave Lake.

Michel, Chanawaimthow (or Grand Michel)

joined the service of the H.B.C. as steersman in 1818. He was at St. Mary's, Peace River, 1818-19, in Athabaska, 1819-20, and again at St. Mary's, 1820-21. He went to Montreal in August 1821.

Miles, Robert Seaborn

Robert Seaborn Miles, a native of Fairford, Oxfordshire, was born in 1795. He entered the H.B.C. service in 1818 as an accountant and writer, and kept the Journal of the Proceedings at Fort Wedderburn during the winter 1818-19, on instructions from Colin Robertson. He passed the winter of 1819-20 at Fort St. Mary's, Peace River, being again employed at Fort Wedderburn during the winter 1820-21. From 1821-23 he was accountant at York Factory. During 1823-24 he obtained leave of absence to England, subsequently resuming duties at York Factory, where he remained during the next ten years. He took charge at York Factory in the autumn of 1833 after the departure of Chief Factor Alexander Christie to Red River. He obtained furlough during 1834-35, and on his return he assumed control of the Rupert's River district at Rupert's House until 1843. From 1843 to 1857 he was in charge at Moose Factory. He then obtained one year's leave of absence, subsequently taking charge of the Lake Huron district at La Cloche from 1858 to 1860, when he obtained furlough for one year prior to his retirement in 1861. Miles was appointed a Chief Trader in 1828 and a Chief Factor in 1844. He became Sheriff of Rupert's Land in 1839, and died in 1870. It appears that he retired to Brockville, Ont., where his daughter Harriet was married at St. Peter's Church on 25th July, 1868, to Adam Hudspeth, barrister of Lindsay, Ontario.

Mowat, Edward

Edward Mowat was a native of Orphir in the Orkneys and was born about 1786: he entered the H.B.C. in 1806 and served for many years as labourer and assistant trader in the Churchill district. He was at Nelson House in 1814 and succeeded William Ross in charge of it in 1819. After the amalgamation he was stationed in the Nelson River district, and from 1824 to 1827 he was employed as an interpreter there, and from 1828 to 1833 as a fisherman at Norway House. In 1833 he retired to the Red River Colony.

Obichon, Pierre

a Canadian middleman born in 1797 and engaged by the H.B.C. in 1814. In 1818-21 he was stationed in the Athabaska district.

O'Dogherty, William St. George

William St. George O'Dogherty, an Irish Canadian, entered the H.B.C. service in 1819 as a clerk, and was at Red River, 1819-20. He was employed at Fort Wedderburn during 1820-21, and in New Caledonia for the two subsequent years. He retired to Canada in 1823. He was apparently employed again in the Montreal department, 1827-28.

Oxley, Jonas

Jonas Oxley, a native of Montrose, Scotland, was a half-pay officer of the 3rd West India Regiment. He entered the H.B.C. service as a clerk in 1819. During the winter 1819-20 he was in Montreal, and was given a gratuity of £50 for his services in escorting J. D. Campbell and other N.W.C. prisoners to Montreal. In 1820-21 he was at Fort Wedderburn. He retired from the service in the latter year, his contract expiring on 1st May, 1822.

Pensonnant, Louis Leon

Louis Leon Pensonnant entered the H.B.C. service in 1818 as a clerk. He served at Carlton, 1818-19, at Ile-à-la-Crosse, 1819-21, at Norway House, 1821-22, and in the Lower Red River District, 1822-23. He subsequently retired to Canada.

Perrault, Jacques

a Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1816. In 1818-19 he was stationed at Great Slave Lake, in 1819-20 he was in the Athabaska district; in 1820-21 he was again at Great Slave Lake.

Perren, Joseph (Perring)

Joseph Perren (Perring), a German, formerly a soldier in the De Meuron Regiment, entered the H.B.C. service in 1817, being employed at Red River until 1819. He was subsequently a clerk at Ile-à-la-Crosse until 1821. He was afterwards in the Athabaska department until 1823, when it appears he retired to Canada.

Philip, Jean

a Canadian bowsman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1816. He was at Fort Wedderburn, 1818-21, and in 1821 he retired to the Red River Colony.

Piche, David

a Canadian middleman. He entered the service of the H.B.C. in 1818 and was in the Athabaska district, 1818-21. He left for Montreal in August 1821.

Prevost, Toussaint

A Canadian middleman in the H.B.C.'s service since 1817. In 1818-19 he was stationed at St. Mary's, Peace River, in 1819-20 in the Athabaska district, and again at St. Mary's, Peace River, in 1820-21. In 1821 he went to Montreal.

Pruden, John Peter

John Peter Pruden, a native of Edmonton in Middlesex, was born in or about the year 1778, and entered the H.B.C. service in 1791, proceeding to York Factory in the Company's ship *Sea Horse*. He was employed as an apprentice at York until 1795, when he was engaged inland for some years. He was at Carlton House, Saskatchewan, in 1795-96, and from 1796 to 1799 was at Edmonton House. In 1798 he finished his apprenticeship and became a writer. During the winter 1799-1800, the journal of Bolsover House was kept by him. He subsequently remained as a writer and trader inland from York Factory, and was in charge of Acton House during winter 1805-06. In 1808 he is described as an inland master and trader, and it is stated that at this time he had been ten years in the Saskatchewan. In the autumn of this year he proceeded to England by the Company's ship *King George*, returning to Hudson Bay by the same ship in the summer of the following year. During the winter of 1809-10 he was in charge at Carlton House, where it seems that he remained for four years as an inland master in the Saskatchewan River district. He remained in charge at Carlton during the years 1814-24. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he was appointed Chief Trader under the Deed Poll. During the year 1824-25 he was granted leave of absence on account of ill-health. In 1825-26 he was in charge at Norway House, subsequently returning to assume control at Carlton, where he remained until his retirement in 1837. He was promoted Chief Factor on 2nd March, 1836. Pruden resided in Red River Settlement after his retirement from the service, and in 1839 he was appointed a Councillor of Assiniboia; in 1844 he became a member of the Board of Works, and on 28th June, 1847, he became Chairman of the same Board. He died at Red River about 1870.

Robertson, Colin

Colin Robertson held a prominent place in the affairs of the H.B.C., particularly prior to the amalgamation. He was born about 1779 and was a clerk in the N.W.C. in 1803. He was stationed most of the time in the English River district. He was dismissed from the service by McDonald of Garth in September 1809 after six years' service. None the less he left the N.W.C. with

a testimonial to his zeal and fidelity. He is mentioned as an N.W.C. clerk in the English River district in 1804 and again in 1806. It was in consequence of his suggestion in 1810—when he wrote a letter to the Governor and Committee containing proposals for the extension of their trade into the Athabaska—that the H.B.C. finally determined to take more energetic measures for securing a share of the trade in that quarter. In 1814 he was engaged by the H.B.C. and Lord Selkirk, subsequently proceeding to Canada. Towards the end of this year he was entrusted with the organisation of an expedition to the Athabaska country, to take place in the summer of 1815, with the object of establishing a trade there. He was also instrumental in securing the appointment of Messrs. Maitland, Garden & Auldjo, as Montreal agents for the H.B.C. at this time. After spending the winter 1814-15 in the neighbourhood of Montreal, he proceeded west with the brigade for Athabaska in May 1815. Finding the Selkirk settlers at Jack River, north of Lake Winnipeg, whither they had been driven on the destruction of the Colony, Robertson left the expedition and, after conducting the settlers back, successfully re-established the Colony in September 1815, afterwards acting as its Governor. In March 1816 he attacked and captured Fort Gibraltar, the N.W.C. post in the Settlement, at the same time arresting Duncan Cameron, the commandant (who was subsequently taken to York Factory and thence sent to England, where he was released without trial). Robertson remained in the Colony until June 1816, when he proceeded to York Factory, afterwards returning as far as Jack River in August. He passed the winter of 1816-17 on the shores of Hudson Bay, mainly at Moose Factory, later going to Montreal during the summer to answer several indictments which had been preferred against him in connection with the destruction of Fort Gibraltar in June 1816. He was finally brought to trial on this account at Montreal in May 1818, together with four others, but 'after a few minutes consideration', they were all acquitted by the jury. Robertson later led an expedition to Athabaska for the purpose of re-establishing Fort Wedderburn. After he had only been there about three weeks he was arrested on 10th October, 1818, by the N.W.C. under Samuel Black and Simon McGillivray, being subsequently detained a prisoner in Fort Chipewyan throughout the ensuing winter. The events at Fort Gibraltar in 1816 again furnished the pretext for his arrest. In the following June he left Fort Chipewyan to undergo his trial at Montreal, but on reaching Cumberland House on 19th June he managed to effect his escape. Robertson passed the winter 1819-20 in charge of Fort St. Mary's, Peace River, and was afterwards re-arrested by a band of N.W.C. partners and clerks at the Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan River on 29th June, 1820, whilst on his way down from Athabaska. Robertson himself stated in a letter to Governor Williams, dated 2nd July, 1820, that he had been arrested in a most illegal manner—apparently without a warrant—upon a certificate from the Clerk of the Court of Montreal of a Bill of Indictment brought against him in 1816. It appears that he was afterwards taken down to Lac La Pluie and thence to Fort William, where he arrived on 21st July, 1820. He was detained for some weeks at Pic, Lake Superior, and afterwards effected his escape when

within a few days' journey of Montreal. He then proceeded to New York, whence he sailed for Liverpool on the *Aden* in November of the same year, George Simpson taking his place in Athabasca for the ensuing winter. He remained in England on business, and in France for pleasure, for some months. He was informed in writing by the H.B.C. on 31st February, 1830, of the pending arrangement with the N.W.C. and that "one of the highest situations of the North" would probably be offered to him, and on 20th March, the Governor and Committee resolved that he be granted a gratuity of £500 and passage and remuneration for his services with & leave the same to be paid to his Creditors. He was made a Chief Factor under the Dual Post of the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1830, and on his return to Canada later in the year he was appointed in charge at Norway House. In 1831-32 he was in charge of the North Branch of the Saskatchewan district, remaining at Norway House during the following year. From 1832-33 he was at the head of affairs at Churchill and subsequently at the Island Lake district until 1836. In 1836 he submitted proposals to Governor Simpson for "improving the navigation of the rivers on the line of communication", at the same time suggesting that the construction of railways at the portages might be of considerable advantage in expediting the transport of goods, etc. Two years later Colin Robertson suggested plans for the construction of a Winter Road from York Factory to Norway House, which were approved by Council in 1838. The work was accordingly commenced and until 1839 proceeded under his personal direction. From 1839-40 he was given charge of the Swan River district at Fort Pelly; in 1840 he was granted furlough, which was later extended until 1841 on account of ill-health. From 1841-42 he assumed control at New Brunswick in the Southern department, when he was granted a year's furlough prior to his retirement from the service in 1842. He died in Montreal on 30th February, 1842. He was appointed a Councillor of the Governors of the H.B.C. Territories in 1830. Robertson's absence in Canada was undoubtedly a serious factor in the bankruptcy of the Liverpool firm of March and Robertson, of which he was a partner. He paid the firm's creditors at the rate of four shillings in the pound, drawing upon his credit with the H.B.C. to do so.

John Flett

Joseph Flett, a Canadian, entered the H.B.C. service in 1816, being first employed as an apprentice clerk at Chipewyan House, Peace River, during the ensuing winter. He subsequently remained in the Athabasca and Peace River districts until he retired to Canada in 1831.

René, Louis Denis de La

Louis Denis de La Rénée entered the H.B.C. service in 1817; he first served in Athabasca and was at Fort Wellington, 1820-21; in 1827-28 he transferred

to the Cumberland district; in 1818-19 he was at Colville House, Peace River, in 1819-20 in the Athabaska district, and in 1820-21 he was in charge of the post at Colville House, Peace River. He retired in 1822 and subsequently joined the South Branch or Bow River Expedition as a hunter. He should not be confused with the Louis de La Ronde who joined the N.W.C. as an apprentice clerk in 1818 and who joined the service of the H.B.C. in 1821.

Rochleau, François

A Canadian steersman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1816. In 1818-19 he was stationed at Lac La Pluie and from 1819-21 in the Athabaska district.

St. Dennis

There were at this time two Canadians named St. Dennis stationed at Fort Wedderburn. Amable, a steersman, joined the H.B.C. in 1815, was at Lesser Slave Lake, 1818-19, at Berens House, 1819-20, and at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21. His contract expired in 1823, and although 'both lazy and careless', he was noted as 'a good voyageur, and can make both sledges and snowshoes'. Hyacinthe St. Dennis was a good carpenter, engaged as a middleman in 1819. He was at Great Slave Lake, 1819-20, at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21, and his contract expired in 1822.

St. Germain, possibly Pierre

A Canadian or half-breed engaged by the H.B.C. as an interpreter in 1818 and serving in the Athabaska district in 1818-20. In 1820-21 he was a member of Lieut. Franklin's Expedition.

Selkirk, Earl of

Thomas Douglas, fifth Earl of Selkirk (1771-1820), succeeded to the earldom on the death of his father in 1799. Throughout his life he displayed an interest in the problems of colonisation, more especially with regard to emigration from the Scottish Highlands, and in 1803, having obtained a grant of Crown Lands, he established a colony on Prince Edward Island, which soon developed into a thriving concern. In 1805 he published his *Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland, with a View of the Causes and Probable Consequences of Emigration*. On 24th November, 1807, he married Jean, only daughter of James Wedderburn-Colville, of Ochiltree and Crombie, and sister of Andrew Colville—later Governor of the H.B.C. Shortly afterwards he acquired shares in the H.B.C. and began to turn his attention towards their territories with the view to the establishment of a colony there. In 1811 he obtained from the H.B.C. a grant of the district known as Assiniboia, which comprised an area of about 116,000 square miles of territory in the valleys of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. In the autumn of 1811 the first settlers set sail from Stornoway, disembarking at York Factory in September of that year. The succeeding winter was passed at York Factory, and in the summer of 1812 the emigrants proceeded to the colony, where Forts Douglas and Daer were being established; both

being named in honour of Selkirk, the latter being the name of a barony which was held by him. The opposition which the colony met from the half-breeds, most of whom had N.W.C. sympathies, was brought to a crisis in 1814, when Miles Macdonell, the Governor of the Colony, issued a proclamation ordering that no provisions were to be removed from the colony for a year owing to the necessities of the settlers. Thereafter hostilities became accentuated, culminating in June 1816, when Governor Robert Semple and twenty of his men were killed in a skirmish at Seven Oaks against a band of Indians, half-breeds and N.W.C. men. In August 1816 Selkirk captured Fort William, the headquarters of the N.W.C. on Lake Superior, where he passed the ensuing winter, and in June 1817 Fort Douglas was re-taken, the settlers were reinstated and order was restored. Selkirk subsequently proceeded to Upper Canada, where he answered various charges which had been made against him by the N.W.C. He was fined £2,000, but it is to be noted that nearly all the members of the jury were connected in some way or another with the N.W.C. At the end of 1818 Selkirk returned to England in broken health, and in the following March he published a letter to Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, complaining of the perversion of justice in the Canadian Law Courts and asking for an enquiry to be instituted before the Privy Council. In June 1819 Sir James Montgomery (Selkirk's brother-in-law) moved in the House of Commons for copies of any correspondence which had taken place relative to the affairs of the Red River Colony. This resulted in the issue of an extensive Blue Book entitled *Papers Relating to the Red River Settlement*. Selkirk afterwards retired to the South of France, where he died at Pau on 8th April, 1820, less than a year before the conclusion of the Deed of Co-partnership between the H.B.C. and N.W.C. In addition to the publications already mentioned, Selkirk was the author of a *Sketch of the British Fur Trade in North America* published in 1816, and also of a pamphlet on the *Scottish Peerage*. George Bryce—his biographer—also attributes to him two anonymous pamphlets, published about 1807, on the *Civilisation of the Indians of British North America*. On Selkirk cf. especially C. Martin, *Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada*, Oxford, 1916. Cf. also Introduction, pp. xix *et seq.*

Shaw, Angus

Angus Shaw was a veteran wintering partner of the N.W.C., in which he was already a clerk before 1787. In 1789 he built a post on Lac D'Original on the Upper Beaver River, and in 1792 Fort George on the Saskatchewan, where he remained in charge in the following year. He also, together with Duncan McGillivray, built the first Fort Augustus on the Saskatchewan in 1795. He became a partner of the N.W.C. between 1795 and 1799, and in 1799 he was in charge of the Upper English River district. On 6th July, 1802, he was appointed to take control of the 'King's Domains, or Tadousac Posts' on behalf of the N.W.C., taking up his headquarters at Quebec. He was one of the signatories to the Agreement of 5th November, 1804, by which the X.Y.Co. was absorbed by the N.W.C., and in 1808 he became a member of McTavish,

McGillivrays & Co. In 1810-11 he was one of the N.W.C. agents at Fort William. In 1819 he was captured with other wintering partners by Governor Williams and sent to England, where he was released. After the amalgamation between the two companies he continued to be a partner of McTavish, McGillivrays & Co., and his estate was involved in that firm's failure in 1825. He died at New Brunswick, New Jersey, on 25th July, 1832.

Simpson, George

Little of value can be discovered about George Simpson before 1821. Even the year of his birth is uncertain; contemporary obituary notices give his age as 68 at the time of his death, in 1860, and other authorities also give 1792 as the year of his birth. Some, however, state that he was born in 1796. But the only reliable evidence makes him five years older than he was generally reckoned. For the Register of Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal, states that he was 73 in 1860, and his monument in Mount Royal Cemetery, Montreal, agrees with this statement. It is therefore very probable that Simpson was born in 1786-7, and was 33 when he first came to Canada.

An illegitimate child can usually be certain as to who is his mother, but not so certain of his father; with Simpson the reverse holds good. There is no reason to doubt that his father was George Simpson, eldest son of Rev. Thomas Simpson of Avoch. His cousin Alexander Simpson states that this was so, and the father was used by the Committee to secure the celebrated piper for his 'esteemed son' in 1827. Alexander Simpson states that George was brought up and educated by his father's sister, Mary, later the mother of Thomas Simpson the explorer and of himself (Alexander). She appears to have devoted herself to young George in a manner remarkable in the aunt of a bastard, and during the years when she had him in her care she steadily refused the hand of Alexander Simpson the elder. But in 1807 she yielded and married her suitor, and George was sent to London.

Simpson would be twenty-one or twenty-two before he went to London. There is no evidence that he ever enjoyed any advanced education up to this time, or that he had been in business, but it is inconceivable that he should have been kept in idleness for so long.

Simpson's career in London is as vague as the rest of his youth. Alexander Simpson says that his aunt Mary prevailed on her brother to take him into his counting-house in London. This uncle was Geddes Mackenzie Simpson, whose daughter, Frances, Simpson later married. Geddes Mackenzie Simpson's firm was the house of Graham and Simpson of 2 Hammond Court, Mincing Lane; in 1809 they had moved to 73 Tower St., and are described as sugar brokers in the Post Office Directory. By 1812 the title of the firm had changed to 'Graham, Simpson and Wedderburn', still broking sugar at 73 Great Tower St. The change meant much for George Simpson; it brought his employers into direct and constant contact with the firm of Wedderburn—an old West Indies house in which Andrew (Wedderburn) Colville was a prominent member. In 1814 Andrew Wedderburn changed his name to Andrew Colville and, in conformity,

the Wedderburn house became Wedderburn, Colvile and Co. in 1815. Simpson continued with the firm of Graham, Simpson and Wedderburn until 1820, and during these years he attracted the attention of Andrew Colvile, whom Alexander Simpson describes as 'an influential gentleman who had a business connexion with the house'.

In 1820 there was a complete re-shuffle, dominated by Andrew Colvile. The Wedderburn firm now became 'Colvile, Wedderburn and Co.': the house of Graham, Simpson and Wedderburn was lent the large sum of £70,000 by the Wedderburn firm, and disappeared from the London Post Office Directory. Of its members, James Graham transferred himself to the Wedderburn premises in Leadenhall and there carried on his business independently, Geddes Mackenzie Simpson soon made a new business connection with an old business neighbour and started the firm of Simpson, Scott and Co.—and George Simpson found employment with the Hudson's Bay Company, of which Andrew Colvile had been a committee-man since 1810.

At the crisis which the Company's affairs had reached in 1820 a good leader was necessary, and Simpson was sent to North America (cf. Introduction, pp. xl *et seq.*). By this time Colvile had known him for at least eight years, and had great confidence in him. He wrote to Samuel Gale that 'I have long known him and have perfect confidence in his honour and discretion in case you should find it necessary to have any confidential communication with him; he is active and intelligent with sufficient promptness and determination'. The Committee (to whom Simpson was presented on February 26th, 1820) endorsed this opinion, and Selkirk also wrote that 'the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company it is to be hoped may be perfectly well attended to in the absence of Governor Williams by Mr. Simpson who appears to be intelligent and active in business as well as of a character likely to conciliate many of the contending parties in that country'.

Simpson travelled via New York, Montreal and the Lakes, left a letter on the North West Company at Fort William, passed the Red River Colony, and met Governor Williams at Norway House. The two then travelled together to Rock Depot. Williams had been told that the Committee had 'perfect confidence in Mr. Simpson's honor and integrity and from his general knowledge of Business and the information which he has been able to acquire here of the Company's affairs, we think he will not find much difficulty in making the general arrangements for the trade, provided he receives the candid and ready assistance of our Chief factors and other traders'. So, when it became clear that he himself would be at liberty during the ensuing winter, but that an active leader would be needed to replace Colin Robertson in Athabaska, he wrote that 'I have deemed it especially necessary from the present state of affairs to require Mr. Simpson's services, which he readily assented to, and I shall confidentially communicate everything of interest in the country to him'.

From the time when he was thus requisitioned for the 'Athabasca Campaign' Simpson's career is too important and too complex to be touched in a biographical note of this nature.

Smith, Edward

Edward Smith was a wintering partner of the N.W.C., whose service was for a long period in the Athabaska and Mackenzie River districts. He entered the service of the N.W.C. before 1806, when he was a clerk in the Athabaska department, and in 1814 he was made a partner of the N.W.C. At the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. he was made a Chief Factor in 1821. He was in charge of the Athabaska district at Fort Chipewyan, 1821-23, and subsequently of the Mackenzie River district at Fort Simpson until 1832. He was on leave of absence, 1832-34, and was then appointed to the Athabaska district at Fort Chipewyan, where he remained until 1837, when he was granted leave prior to his retirement in 1840. He died in 1849.

Soucisse, Joseph

A Canadian employed as a bully by the N.W.C. He was in Athabaska 1818-19 and 1819-20. In the spring of 1820 he was arrested by the H.B.C. on a legal warrant for his misdeeds in Athabaska, but he escaped from George Spence, the H.B.C. constable, at the Grand Rapid as he was being taken to Montreal. He returned to Athabaska, 1820-21, and was stationed at Fort Chipewyan, and later at the N.W.C. Watch-house.

Spence, Joseph

Joseph Spence entered the H.B.C. service in 1794. He was first employed at Churchill, and in 1800 was an Assistant Trader at that post. He left Nelson House on 9th August, 1802, for the purpose of proceeding to Rein Deer Lake, where he arrived on 26th August. In 1805 he again proceeded to Rein Deer Lake, where he built a house. Whilst in charge there in 1806 he was made a prisoner by the N.W.C. and taken to the Frog Portage, where he was forced by Donald McTavish to sign an agreement regarding trade with the Indians. He was in charge at Indian Lake, 1808-11. He returned to Europe in 1811-12, and again during 1813-14. He was at Churchill, 1812-13, and in 1815-16 was an Assistant Trader at Oxford House. He was at Ile-à-la-Crosse, 1816-21, and in the Nelson River district between the years 1821 and 1823, when he retired to the Red River Settlement. He died on 14th October, 1856. His daughter Sapphira married John Clarke.

Spencer, John

John Spencer was born in England in 1790, and was a god-son of Alex. Lean, Secretary of the H.B.C. Spencer was 'once a Blue Coat Boy', educated at Christ's Hospital, and he went to Churchill in the service of the Company as a writer in 1806. In 1812 he was an assistant accountant at Severn—a 'most meritorious officer'—and in 1813 he was a writer at York. In 1814 he was made a Councillor and Sheriff of Assiniboia. He was under arrest at Montreal with Governor Miles Macdonell, but was acquitted in 1818 and was again at York as an accountant, 1819-23. In 1823 he was appointed to

Pelican Lake, English River district, and in 1824 to Lac la Ronge. In 1826 he was made a Chief Trader and sent to the Columbia district, and in 1827 he was on furlough. He retired in 1828, rejoined in 1834, and was retired to Red River in 1857. He retired to Goderich, Canada, in 1861, on a pension of £50 a year, and he was still alive, and writing a good hand, in 1863.

Stuart, John

John Stuart, a native of Strathspey, Scotland, was born in 1779. He was one of the most distinguished officers of the N.W.C.; joining their service in 1799, he was sent to the Peace River district. He was associated with Simon Fraser in his discoveries and trading activities west of the Rocky Mountains. He accompanied him westward to New Caledonia in 1806, when, after visiting McLeod's Lake, they proceeded to the Nechaco River, which Fraser named Stuart River in honour of his companion. Stuart Lake, where they formed an establishment later known as Fort St. James, was also named in Stuart's honour. Later in the same year, Stuart went overland to Fraser Lake, bringing back so favourable a report that it was determined to construct Fort Fraser at the east end of this lake. He later accompanied Simon Fraser in the summer of 1808 from Fort George (New Caledonia) down the Fraser River almost to the Pacific. On observing the latitude, Fraser found it was considerably further to the north than he had anticipated, thereby proving that he was not on the Columbia. In 1809 Stuart succeeded Fraser as Superintendent of New Caledonia, a position which he continued to hold during the next fifteen years. In 1813 he was made a partner of the N.W.C., and in May 1813 he left Stuart Lake to join J. G. McTavish on the Columbia River. He reached Astoria in the autumn, and it appears that he did not return to New Caledonia until the following year. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821, he was made a Chief Factor, and remained in charge of New Caledonia for the next three years. Then he was appointed to the Saskatchewan district at Carlton House, where he assumed control from 1824-26. In 1826-27 he retained the charge of the Saskatchewan district, moving his headquarters to Lesser Slave Lake, which was now included in that district. During the next five years Stuart was in charge of the Winnipeg River district at Fort Alexander (Bas de la Rivière), and from 1832-35 of the Mackenzie River district, at Fort Simpson. In the latter year he was granted furlough, which was subsequently extended until 1st June, 1839, when he left the service. He retired to Forres, Scotland, where he died on 14th January, 1847. He was appointed a Councillor of the Governors of the H.B.C. Territories in 1822. Donald A. Smith (Lord Strathcona) was a nephew of Stuart's.

Sutherland, James

James Sutherland, a native of Ronaldshay in the Orkneys, was born in 1778, and entered the H.B.C. service in 1797. He was at first a writer at York Factory, and during the period 1798-1803 acted in a similar capacity inland from that place. He was in charge of Cumberland House, 1803-05, and of the

post at Green Lake, 1805-06, when he is first referred to as a trader. During the period 1808-13 he was master and trader at Cumberland House. In the autumn of the latter year he sailed for Europe by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales* from York Factory, returning *via* Canada in the following spring. He was given charge of the East and West Winnipeg districts, which included all the Red River trading posts, residing at Jack River House during the winter 1814-15. During the winter 1815-16 he was at Rivière Qu'Appelle in the West Winnipeg district. In May 1816, when in charge of some H.B.C. boats at the Rivière Qu'Appelle, Sutherland was attacked by a party under Cuthbert Grant and carried prisoner to the N.W.C. post. During 1816-17 he was in the Swan River district, and in 1817-18 at Fort Hibernia. In 1818-19 he was in charge of the Forks of the Red River, and from 1819 to 1821 of the Swan River district. After the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821, Sutherland became a Chief Factor under the Deed Poll and was in charge of the Saskatchewan department at Edmonton. Here he remained until the following year, when he returned to Europe on leave of absence. He was subsequently in charge at Severn from 1823 to 1825; and afterwards was granted a year's furlough for the purpose of proceeding to the Red River Settlement with the object of obtaining the benefit of medical advice. This furlough was later extended until 1st June, 1827, when he retired from the service. He proceeded to Europe by the H.B.C. ship *Prince of Wales* in the autumn of 1826 and later retired to the Red River Settlement, where he obtained a grant of land. He became a Councillor of the Governor in Chief of Rupert's Land in 1815, a Councillor of the Governors of the H.B.C. Territories in 1822, and a Councillor of Assiniboia in 1839. He died at the Red River Settlement on 30th September, 1844. He should be distinguished from an earlier James Sutherland, who died whilst in charge of the H.B.C. post at Brandon House in 1797.

Swain, Thomas

Thomas Swain, born about 1779, entered the H.B.C. service in 1793. He served as a writer at York Factory until 1796, and later as a writer inland. He accompanied Peter Fidler to Lake Athabaska in 1802, and when the latter established Nottingham House, Swain went on to Peace River where he set up a post which he called Mansfield House; this he was obliged to abandon owing to the refusal of the Indians to work for him. He subsequently established Chiswick House on Great Slave Lake in 1803. Swain was left in charge of Nottingham House in 1805, while Fidler went east. He wintered in 1805-06 at Great Slave Lake and in 1806-07 at Jack River. He was a trader at Severn in 1812, returning to Europe in 1812-13. From 1814 to 1816 he was master at Swan River (Fort Hibernia). He was again in Europe from 1817 to 1819, at Norway House, 1819-20, and Cumberland House, 1820-21. He retired on 1st June, 1821. He should be distinguished from Thomas Swain, Junior, who served in the H.B.C. as a clerk in the Cumberland and Swan River districts between the years 1820-25.

Tait, Peter

An Orkneyman from Kirkwall serving in the H.B.C. as a fisherman. He joined the H.B.C. service in 1809; from 1818-21 he was stationed in the Athabaska district. He returned to Europe in 1821.

Thomas, Charles

Charles Thomas, a native of Moose Factory, Hudson Bay, originally entered the H.B.C. service in 1808 and retired in 1814, during which time he served as writer and assistant trader at New Brunswick. He re-entered the service in 1815, serving in Athabaska until 1817, and at Cumberland House, 1817-18. He was at St. Mary's, Peace River district, 1818-19, in Athabaska, 1819-20, and at St. Mary's, Peace River district, 1820-21. Here he took charge from July to October 1820, prior to the arrival of Duncan Finlayson. He went to Canada in 1822, but later re-joined the service, being found in 1830 at Lake of Two Mountains in the Montreal department. He appears to have retired about 1832.

Thompson (Thomson), John

John Thompson entered the service of the N.W.C. before 1789. From 1789 to 1791 he was in charge of the post 'near the lower part of Grass River in the Fort Nelson track'. He was on the Peace River in 1798 and in Athabaska in 1799. 'Old Rocky Mountain House' was built by him in 1800. In 1804 he became a partner of the N.W.C., and he is mentioned in the N.W.C. Minute Books as being in the Athabaska district during the years 1806-09, and subsequently at Cumberland House, 1811-12, and in the Upper English River district in 1813 and 1814. He is a rather elusive person. Coues in his *New Light* identifies him as John Thompson, a clerk of the N.W.C. in the Athabaska district in 1798-99. This Thompson's name is signed by attorneys to the agreement between the N.W.C. and X.Y.C. on 5th November, 1804. On the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 Thompson was made a Chief Factor in the service of the former, but he retired during the same year to Lower Canada and probably died there on 8th January, 1828.

Tibeau, Joseph

A Canadian bowsman born in 1786 and engaged by the H.B.C. in 1815. He was stationed at Great Slave Lake, 1818-19, in the Athabaska district, 1819-20, and again at Great Slave Lake, 1820-21.

Todd, William

William Todd, an Irishman, appears to have been born about 1784. He entered the H.B.C. service as a surgeon in 1816, proceeding to York Factory in the Company's ship *Prince of Wales*. He was first employed at Cumberland

House until 1818, when he was appointed surgeon at the Red River Colony. In 1819-20 he was employed at Fort Wedderburn, Athabaska, returning to Europe by the ship *Eddystone* from York Factory in the latter year. On his return to North America in 1821 he was appointed clerk and surgeon at Lower Red River until 1822, when his services were transferred to York Factory, where he remained until 1827. He was subsequently employed as a surgeon in the Columbia district for two years until 1829, when he was placed in charge of the Upper Red River district with headquarters at Brandon House. During 1831-32 he remained in charge of the same district, residing at Fort Ellice. In 1833 he was appointed in temporary charge at Red River owing to the ill-health of Chief Factor Donald McKenzie, and was then given charge of the Swan River district with headquarters at Fort Pelly, where he remained from 1834 until 1843. During 1843-44 Todd was granted furlough and went to Europe. In 1844 he was appointed in charge of Severn in the York district, and in 1845 he resumed his former charge at Fort Pelly, where he remained until 1851, with the exception that he was granted furlough during 1849-50. In 1851 he was again granted furlough, and he died on 22nd December of that year. He was promoted Chief Trader in 1831.

Vignau, Luc

Luc Vignau, a French Canadian, entered the service of the H.B.C. in 1818, being employed as clerk in Athabaska during the ensuing five years. He wintered, 1819-20, at Fort Wedderburn, and, 1820-21, at Berens House. He retired to Canada in 1823.

Wentzell, Willard Ferdinand

Willard Ferdinand Wentzell, a Norwegian, was born in or about the year 1777, and apparently entered the service of the N.W.C. in 1799. According to an early Minute Book of the N.W.C. he was employed as a clerk in the Athabaska district in 1806, and Coues states in his *New Light* that Wentzell was stationed at the Forks of the Mackenzie River in 1807, and in the same district during winter, 1810-11. In 1814 he was at Fort Franklin on Bear Lake, and in 1816 at Fort Chipewyan. In August 1818 he is mentioned as being at Rainy Lake House and at Great Slave Lake during the next two years. In 1820-21 he was attached to the first Franklin Expedition, and on 26th March, 1821, he is mentioned as being at Fort Enterprise on the Coppermine River. On his return from the expedition, on the invitation of Simpson, he joined the H.B.C. He was at Fort Simpson, Mackenzie River district, 1822-24, and served subsequently at Fort Chipewyan until his retirement to Canada in 1825. He apparently re-entered the Company's service in 1827, and was employed as a clerk at Mingan in the Montreal department until 1829, when he definitely retired. He died of cholera in 1832.

Whitman, Joseph

A Canadian middleman engaged by the H.B.C. in 1819 and serving at Great Slave Lake, 1819-20, and at Fort Wedderburn, 1820-21.

Williams, William

William Williams was appointed Resident Governor of the H.B.C. Territories in 1818. In the following year, as a consequence of the aggressions of the N.W.C., he took an expedition to the Grand Rapids at the mouth of the Saskatchewan and captured a number of the partners and servants of the N.W.C., and sent some of them to England for trial. The N.W.C. procured a warrant for the arrest of Williams, and Simpson was sent out to hold his position in case he were removed from the territories. At the amalgamation of the H.B.C. and N.W.C. in 1821 he was appointed Joint-Governor with Simpson, and in the following year was given charge of the Southern department of the territories. In 1826 he returned to England, and died in 1837. Cf. Introduction, p. xxxvii.

Yale, James Murray

James Murray Yale was born about 1796 and entered the H.B.C. service at Montreal in 1815, being at first employed as a clerk at Fort Wedderburn in Athabaska, 1815-17. On 2nd April, 1817, he was made a prisoner by the N.W.C. at Fort Chipewyan, whence he was conveyed to Great Slave Lake and there detained until the following September, when he was released. He passed 1817-18 partly at the Old Fort and partly at Fort Wedderburn. In summer 1818 he proceeded under Joshua Halcro to Peace River, where they established Colville House. He passed winter, 1818-19, at Colville House, Peace River, and after a further period of two years in the Athabaska and Peace River districts, he was transferred west of the Rocky Mountains, where he spent the remainder of a long life. He was in charge at Fort George, New Caledonia, during the period 1821-24, and in the summer of 1823, during his absence on a visit to the posts at Fraser and Stuart Lakes, two H.B.C. men were murdered here by the natives. Yale was held partly responsible for the incident, since he had absented himself from his post contrary to the instructions of Chief Factor John Stuart, but he was later exonerated by the Council of the Northern department in 1825, when it was found that no satisfactory evidence could be produced to show that the misfortune was attributable to him. After the abandonment of Fort George in the spring of 1824, Yale was transferred to Alexandria, where he passed the ensuing summer, and in the following year he was appointed to Stuart's Lake (Fort St. James). In winter 1826-27 he was apparently again stationed at Alexandria. In 1827, owing to ill-health, he accompanied Chief Factor Connelly to Fort Vancouver (Columbia River) to get medical advice. There he remained until the summer of 1828. After seven years' service in New Caledonia, Yale joined Governor Simpson at Fort St. James in September 1828, and accompanied him on his journey from York Factory to the Pacific as far as Fort

Langley. Thenceforward he was stationed at Fort Langley until 1859, being in charge there during the last twenty-five years of this period. Though esteemed a good trader, he never rose above a Chief Tradership, to which he was appointed in 1844. In 1859 he was granted a year's furlough prior to his retirement from the service in the following year, when it appears that he settled near Victoria. He died on 7th May, 1871. Fort Yale, which was established in 1848, was named after him.

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Route
of the Expedition from
York Factory to Cumberland House.
and the SUMMER & WINTER TRACKS from thence to
ISLE A LA CROSSE,
in 1810 & 1820.

References

† Denotes the place where an Observation the Latitude was taken

⊙ D^o for Longitude. V for Variation. T for Tides.

— Direction of the Stream.

The figures at the Portages express the distance in yards of such Portages



ROUTE MAP OF SIMPSON'S ATHABASCA JOURNEY 1820-21

Scale 1:2,500,000
English Miles
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80



The grid lines at a distance of 80 miles apart are intended to be used as an approximate only

Monte *of the Expedition from* *Niagara to Fort Providence.* *in 1809, 20*

REFERENCES

† Denotes the place where an observation of latitude was taken.
 ○ or * Longitude † the latitude † the day
 † Denotes the source
 The degree of the longitude express the distance in yards or miles from the







